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Staffordshire pots & potters

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STAFFORDSHIRE POTS & POTTERS

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Vase presented by Staffordshire Liberals to the Right Hon. W. E. GLADSTONE.
Designed and decorated in *pâte sur pâte* by FREDERICK RHEAD.

STAFFORDSHIRE POTS & POTTERS

BY THE BROTHERS

G. WOOLLISCROFT REID, B.D., B.A.

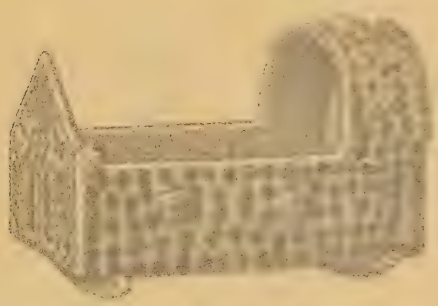
AUTHOR OF "THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN,"
"THE TREATMENT OF [illegible]"

AND

FREDERICK ALFRED REID

SOMETIME ART DIRECTOR OF THE "BROWNFIELD'S CHELSEA POTTERY"

WITH 4 COLOURED PLATES, 116 ILLUSTRATIONS IN HALF TONE, AND 90 DRAWINGS IN PEN LINE BY THE AUTHORS



NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
1907

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Vase presented by Staffordshire Liberals to the Right Hon. W
Designed and decorated in *pâte sur pâte* by FREDERICK

STAFFORDSHIRE POTS & POTTERS

BY THE BROTHERS

G. WOOLLISCROFT RHEAD, R.E.

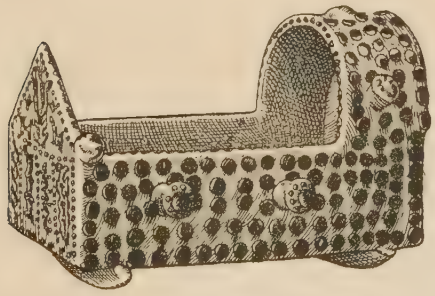
AUTHOR OF "THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN,"
"THE TREATMENT OF DRAPERY IN ART," ETC., ETC.

AND

FREDERICK ALFRED RHEAD

SOMETIME ART DIRECTOR OF THE "BROWNFIELD GUILD POTTERY"

WITH 4 COLOURED PLATES, 116 ILLUSTRATIONS
IN HALF TONE, AND 90 DRAWINGS IN PEN LINE
BY THE AUTHORS



SLIP CRADLE. TUNSTALL MUSEUM

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
1907

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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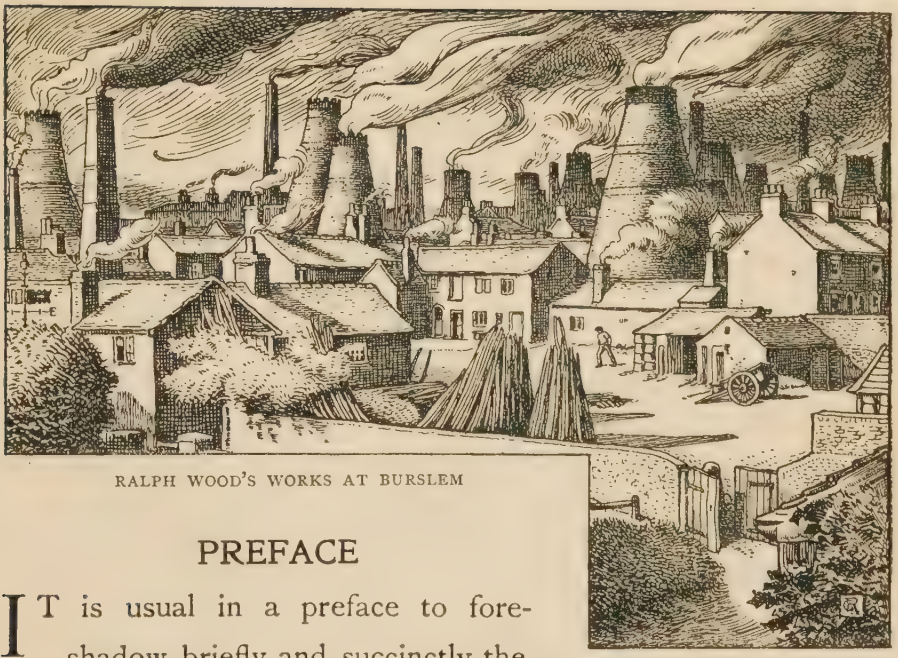


RALPH WOOD'S WORKS AT BURSLEM

PREFACE

IT is usual in a preface to foreshadow briefly and succinctly the general character of the book. A preface may be said to stand in the same relation to the book as the overture does to the opera—a preamble, an abridged statement of the author's aim, a hint at the sort of fare with which the reader may expect to be regaled.

The main purpose, therefore, of the present work is to chronicle the chief triumphs of the Staffordshire potter's craft, and to make the reader acquainted, as far as may be, with the personality of the more considerable potters, and the conditions under which they worked. The book aims at being neither a history (in the generally accepted sense of the term), a directory, nor a technical treatise, but a vivid account of the life of the potter and of his surroundings. It is, further, an attempt to impart the peculiar

flavour, so to speak, of the district, and its local colour, which, so far as the authors are aware, has not hitherto been made.

The district known as the Potteries—with its contradictory characteristics, its beauty and ugliness, its enterprise and lethargy, its humour and stolidity, quaintness, squalor and prosperity—is teeming with interesting matter, not alone to those connected with the Ceramic Arts, but to the ordinary citizen. This is amply confirmed by the interest evinced by the public in fragmentary (and often unauthoritative) records of incidents connected with potters and potting.

The craft itself is peculiarly fascinating, from the element of mystery which has been inseparably connected with the potter's art of all times. Its complexity, its variety, and the number of processes necessitating a considerable knowledge of chemistry, of physics, and of art—both plastic and pictorial—make it far more comprehensive than any other craft or industry. Moreover, accident, chance, and investigation are always leading to fresh discoveries, chemical and technical, and the attempts to preserve such secrets have often provoked devices for their discovery, often of a dramatic and romantic nature.

The potter's individuality is remarkable. No serious attempt appears to have been made to describe him fairly, with all his virtues and foibles, his talents and limitations. He has been unhappy in his principal chroniclers. Dr. Plot generally sums him up as a scheming knave, whose chief ambition was to cheat the butter-gaugers. Shaw all but canonises him. He mentions nearly every potter of his time separately by name. If we are to

believe him, the potters of that day possessed all the public and private virtues. He rings the same peal for every one, but he rings the changes in his choice of phrases with amazing ingenuity. Indeed, his laudatory vocabulary, in its range and variety, stops very little short of actual genius. Shaw had undoubted talent. His "Chemistry of Pottery" was an able book for its time, and we are indebted to his "History of the Staffordshire Potteries" for some curious facts, though his work, outside matters relating to his contemporaries, and without the pale of his own observation, is very unreliable. He frequently bases his theories on the testimony of "very aged persons" of "unimpaired memory," whose parents "lived near the spot," or "were present."

Very little indeed is to be learned from any of the existing histories of the district, which throws light on the potter's personality, his mode of living, his aspirations (if he had any outside his business), and his recreations. One gets occasional glimpses behind the scenes in Mr. Jewitt's and Miss Meteyard's "Wedgwood," but the work of each is professedly a history of Wedgwood and his time, and does not pretend to deal with the idiosyncrasies of the potters as a community. The subject, therefore, in the present work, is considered from an entirely fresh point of view, and there will be found a certain proportion of absolutely new material, of interest not only to the general reader but to connoisseurs, while an important feature of the work is a series of line drawings of the older portions of the district which are now fast disappearing. The authors may perhaps claim to be peculiarly well fitted for the task they have set themselves, as they are natives of the

district they endeavour to describe, and have been closely connected with potters and potting all their lives. They are natives in the fullest sense, their forbears having dwelt in North Staffordshire for at least four centuries.

The authors are glad to avail themselves of this opportunity of expressing their obligations to Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher, F.R.S., for permission to reproduce a number of examples from his fine collection at Cambridge; to Mr. Frank Falkner for his kindness in looking through the proof sheets of the chapter on "Staffordshire Figures," and for many valuable suggestions; to the Corporation of Salford for permission to use the block of the "Pew Group" from the catalogue of their exhibition of Staffordshire figures at Peel Park; to Sir L. Alma-Tadema, O.M., R.A., for the picture of "Hadrian"; to Messrs. T. Goode and Sons for the "Minton" Vase; to Mr. Solon, Mr. J. Wilcox Edge, Mr. Stanley Thorogood, Mr. A. Caddie, Mr. L. Jahn, Mr. Robert Hempton, Mr. Bernard Moore, Mr. Austin, of Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, and to Messrs. John Eyre, R.B.A., and G. W. Rhead, senr., for help in various ways.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

CORRIGENDA

In the descriptions of illustrations of Combed Tiles facing p. 104; Elers and Astbury teapots facing p. 154; mug, "Midnight Conversations," facing p. 180, after "Hanley Museum" read "Jahn Collection." The Basaltes Kettle facing p. 210 is in the Hanley Museum, not the Burslem Museum as stated. On p. 257, for the words "page 36" read "page 86." On pp. 86, 87, 88, 184, 185, for "Plott" read "Plot." In Index and on p. 182, after Mr. W. Turner's name, for "F.R.S." read "F.S.S." On p. 241, for "William Adams, Master Potter," read "William Adams, an old English potter." On p. 316, for the word "Spode" read "Copeland's."

XII. TRANSITION 138

XIII. THE PASSING OF THE ELERSES 151

XIV. SALT-GLAZE 166

XV. THOMAS WHIELDON 187

XVI. WHAT WEDGWOOD DID 199

XVII. WEDGWOOD'S RIVALS, IMITATORS, AND FOLLOWERS—I . 232

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVIII.	WEDGWOOD'S RIVALS, IMITATORS, AND FOLLOWERS—II	243
XIX.	STAFFORDSHIRE FIGURES	255
XX.	LUSTRED WARES	270
XXI.	THE BIRTH OF THE VICTORIAN POTTERIES	277
XXII.	THE VICTORIAN POTTERS	300
XXIII.	THE FOREIGN CONTINGENT	315
XXIV.	THE STAFFORDSHIRE MAN ABROAD	330
XXV.	"BIDDLE" MOOR	338
XXVI.	MINTON'S ART-POTTERY STUDIO	347
XXVII.	NOW—AND AFTER	363

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

COLOURED PLATES

GLADSTONE PRESENTATION VASE. By Frederick Rhead . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

JUG. Bethnal Green Museum 288

STUDY OF FLOWERS. Hürten 322

GROUP OF POTTERY. Bernard Moore 368

HALF-TONE PLATES

TRENTHAM HALL 2

HADRIAN VISITING A POTTERY IN BRITAIN (Sir L. Alma-Tadema, O.M., R.A.), AND ROMAN CUP. (Two views.) British Museum. 28

MEDIÆVAL HARVEST FLASK AND "ENCAUSTIC TILES," ABBEY HULTON . . . 56

COSTREL AND PUZZLE JUG. Glaisher Collection. 76

SLIP BOWL AND BUTTER-POT. Hanley Museum. FLOWER-HOLDER. Glaisher Collection 88

JUG AND POSSET-POT. Glaisher Collection. THREE SLIP PORRINGERS. Hanley Museum 102

THREE COMBED TILES. Hanley Museum 104

SLIP DISH ("Thomas Toft") AND TWO-HANDLED POSSET-POT. South Kensington Museum 112

TINKERSCLOUGH 114

SLIP DISH (Ralph Toft, 1677), British Museum. LARGE TYG, Glaisher Collection 116

SLIP CRADLE (Joseph Glass, 1703). INCISED CRADLE, YELLOW GLAZE. Glaisher Collection 122

HARVEST JUG. Hanley Museum 134

ELERS AND BÖTTCHER TEAPOTS. ELERS TEAPOT. Hanley Museum . . . 144

ELERS PIPES. ELERS AND ASTBURY TEAPOTS. Hanley Museum 154

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

TEAPOT, ELERS STYLE. South Kensington Museum 158

CREAM-JUG, SUGAR-BOWL, TEAPOT, AND COVERED JUG. Astbury. Glaisher Collection 162

GREY SALT-GLAZED COVERED JAR, MOULD, AND WEDGWOOD LEAD-GLAZED CREAM-COLOURED SUGAR-BOX. South Kensington Museum 168

TWO "PEW" GROUPS. British Museum and Falkner and Sidebotham Collection 170

VESSEL IN FORM OF A BARREL. DOUBLE TEA-CADDY. Glaisher Collection . . 174

SALT-GLAZED ENAMELLED MUG, "MIDNIGHT CONVERSATIONS." (Two views.) Hanley Museum 180

SALT-GLAZED ENAMELLED MUG, JUG, AND TEAPOT. Glaisher Collection . . 182

AGATE TEAPOT AND DOUBLE TEA-CADDY. Whieldon. Glaisher Collection . . 190

SAUCE-BOAT, PIERCED BASKET, AGATE JUG AND TEAPOT, PINEAPPLE AND CAULIFLOWER TEAPOTS. Whieldon. Burslem Museum 194

TORTOISESHELL PLATES, MOTTLED TEA-CADDY, CAULIFLOWER PLATE AND GREEN AND IVORY GLAZED JUG. Burslem Museum 196

STATUE OF WEDGWOOD. By Rowland Morris. Wedgwood Institute, Burslem . 202

WEDGWOOD VASE (APOTHEOSIS OF HOMER) AND PIGEON-COTE. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 206

JUG (Adams of Greenfields). Tunstall Museum. BASALTES KETTLE (Wedgwood). Burslem Museum 210

TOILET WARE (Wedgwood). Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. TUREEN AND TEAPOT (Joseph Mayer). Eyre Collection 214

DOCUMENT IN BURSLEM OLD CHURCH. PORTRAIT OF WEDGWOOD, by L. M. Solon 218

WEDGWOOD AND BYERLEY'S SHOWROOMS IN ST. JAMES'S SQUARE 220

TWO PANELS OF "THE MONTHS." By Rowland Morris. Façade of the Wedgwood Institute, Burslem 222

TERRA-COTTA PANELS. By Rowland Morris. Façade of the Wedgwood Institute, Burslem 226

ADAMS SLAB (Bagshawe Collection) AND STONEWARE JUG (Burslem Museum). . 232

SOLID JASPER JUG (Harland Collection) AND STONEWARE JUG (Hanley Museum). Adams 234

ADAMS STONEWARE JUG. Cox Collection. ADAMS JUG: BACCHANALIANS AND SATYRS 236

BLUE PRINTED WARE. Adams of Greengates. Chomley Collection and Tunstall Museum. 238

SPONGED WARE (Adams of Greenfields). DISH, engraved by Brookes. Tunstall Museum. 240

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

DISH, BLUE PRINTED (Adams of Greenfields), AND PLATE (by Clews). Tunstall Museum 242

TEAPOT (E. Mayer) AND TURNER VASE. Eyre Collection 244

COFFEE-POT (Turner) (Frank Falkner Collection), AND TANKARD (Adams jasper). (Tunstall Museum) 246

JASPER KETTLE. By Neale. Hanley Museum 248

PALMER AND TURNER VASES. Wedgwood Institute 250

FOUR JUGS. Birch, Keeling and Toft, Hollins, and Wilson. Burslem Museum . 252

SALT-GLAZED AGATE CAT. JUG, BEAR AND BULLDOG. Glaisher Collection . . 256

THE VICAR AND "MOSES." By Ralph Wood. South Kensington Museum . . 258

FIGURES OF "PRUDENCE" AND "FORTITUDE." Glaisher Collection. . . . 264

THE ASSASSINATION OF MARAT BY CHARLOTTE CORDAY, AND STATUETTE OF MILTON. Glaisher Collection 266

BUSTS AND GROUP, Tunstall Museum. INKSTANDS, JOHN RIDGWAY AND HIS WIFE. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 268

THREE JUGS, SILVER RESIST (Eyre Collection), AND COPPER LUSTRES (Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr.) 270

TWO JUGS, AND PERFORATED BASKET AND VASE, LUSTRED WARES. Hanley Museum 274

TEAPOT AND SLOP BOWL. New Hall. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. . . 280

SPODE TEAPOT, SUGAR-BOX AND CREAM-JUG. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. . 284

ADAMS CUP AND SAUCER. Tunstall Museum. TRIAL PLATE. E. Mayer. Eyre Collection 292

BASALTES VASE (Alcock) AND SUGAR-BOX. E. Mayer. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 296

PRINTED PUNCH-BOWL (INTERIOR AND PROFILE). Minton and Boyle. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 300

FRUIT DISH (Wedgwood) AND CREAM-COLOURED FIGURE. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 304

TWO MINTON CHINA FIGURES. Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr. 308

VASE modelled by Carrier-Belleuse, and decorated by L. M. Solon (Messrs. T. Goode & Co.) 318

WHIELDON ANIMALS. GROUP, HARE AND BOA-CONSTRICTOR. Hanley Museum . 326

BUSTS AND COFFEE-POT (Warburton) AND SALT-GLAZED WARE (Adams of Stoke). Tunstall Museum 332

PLATE (Poole and Lakin), BASALTES CREAM-JUG AND SUGAR-BOX (Eyre Collection), AND LION (Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr.) 340

TRIAL TILE (by W. S. Coleman) (Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr.), AND THE FALCONER (by H. S. Marks, R.A.) (Eyre Collection) 350

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

PILGRIM BOTTLE (designed by W. S. Coleman) (Eyre Collection), AND DRAGON BOTTLE (Collection of G. W. Rhead, Senr.) 356

SKETCH MODELS FOR WEDGWOOD INSTITUTE, BURSLEM 360

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

SLIP CRADLE. Tunstall Museum . . . . . *Title page*

PAGE

HEADPIECE, RALPH WOOD'S WORKS AT BURSLEM v

FIGURE OF A PIPER, ASTBURY. Falkner and Sidebotham Collection . . . xvi

BRIDGE IN TRENTHAM PARK 1

THE POTTERIES FROM HARTSHILL 5

FENTON MARL PITS 7

THE EARLY BRITISH POTTER 11

EARLY BRITISH FLANGED URNS 13

PRE-ROMAN POTS, STAFFORDSHIRE WARE 15

DANISH URN (Tailpiece) 19

VASE ("MURCURIO"). British Museum 21

VASE ("Camaro F.") British Museum 23

THE ROMAN POTTER IN BRITAIN 25

ARETINE BOWL. Bethnal Green Museum 27

VASE, RED WARE, IMBRICATED. Bethnal Green Museum 31

ANGLO-SAXON URN. British Museum 34

ANGLO-SAXON URN. British Museum 36

ANGLO-SAXON CINERARY URNS 38

DIMSDALE HALL AT THE PRESENT DAY 39

ANGLO-SAXON URN BURIAL 43

ANGLO-SAXON CINERARY URN OF UNUSUAL SHAPE. British Museum . . . 46

ANGLO-SAXON PITCHER. British Museum 47

MEDIÆVAL TILES, "ENCAUSTIC." British Museum 51

THREE PITCHERS, ELEVENTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES. Guildhall Museum . 54

SMALL EWER, THIRTEENTH CENTURY. South Kensington Museum . . . 60

VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A KNIGHT 62

GREEN-GLAZED EWER. South Kensington Museum 63

THE ENCAUSTIC-TILE MAKER 67

PITCHER, FOURTEENTH CENTURY. British Museum 68

EARLY GREEN-GLAZED PITCHER 69

GREEN-GLAZED JUG, FOURTEENTH CENTURY (TWO VIEWS). Guildhall Museum . 71

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

JUG, FOURTEENTH CENTURY. Guildhall Museum 72
CANDLE BRACKET. British Museum 81
GREEN-GLAZED JUG. South Kensington Museum 82
BUTTER-POT. South Kensington Museum 83
THREE-HANDLED TYG, 1621. Glaisher Collection 84
TWO MONEY-BOXES, YELLOW GLAZE. Glaisher Collection 86
HANGING CANDLE-STAND. British Museum 91
PUZZLE JUG. British Museum 93
SLIP CANDLESTICK. British Museum 95
TYGS. Tunstall Museum 96
FUDDLING CUP. British Museum 97
POSSET-POT. British Museum 99
VESSEL OF GROTESQUE FORM. Guildhall Museum 100
"SHORD RUCKS". 101
SLIP CAN 105
SLIP MONEY-BOX. South Kensington Museum 107
THOMAS TOFT IN HIS WORKSHOP 108
SLIP DISH, "PELICAN IN HER PIETY" 111
SLIP CRUET STAND. British Museum 120
SLIP CRADLE, 1691. British Museum 122
SLIP DISH, W. W., 1749. Hanley Museum 124
SLIP DISH. Glaisher Collection 127
OWL JUG. British Museum 128
SLIP DISH INSCRIBED S.M. British Museum 130
SLIP DISH INSCRIBED S.M. British Museum 131
SLIP MUG, 1719. British Museum 132
GRAFFITO HARVEST JUG. British Museum 133
MEMORIAL TABLET. British Museum 135
DIMSDALE HALL. Front View 140
DIMSDALE HALL. FROM THE NORTH 141
DIAGRAM, PIPE-MAKING MACHINE 153
BRADWELL HOUSE 156
BRADWELL WOOD 157
BOTTLE, SCRATCHED BLUE. British Museum 166
LONGTON HALL, 1906 179
SALT-GLAZE SAGGER 186
CAULIFLOWER COFFEE-POT 187
VIEW OF WEDGWOOD'S WORKS 199

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

GREEN-GLAZED PUZZLE JUG. South Kensington Museum 201

WEDGWOOD CREAM WARE TEACUP. Eyre Collection 214

RALPH WOOD'S WORKS AT BURSLEM 260

VESSEL IN FORM OF A BEAR. Glaisher Collection 263

PORTICO OF HILL POTTERY, BURSLEM 277

CAVERSWALL CASTLE 310

BUSINESS CARD, MINTON'S ART-POTTERY STUDIO. H. S. Marks, R.A. . . . 347

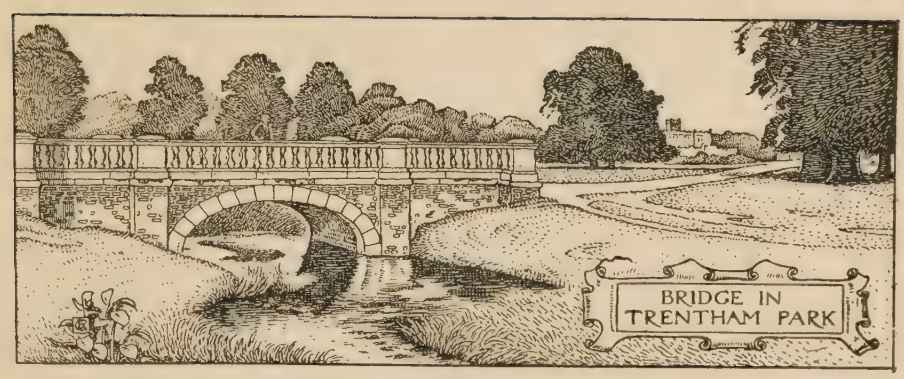
MAJOLICA DISH. By G. Woolliscroft Rhead 354

OLD FLINT MILL, BOTTESLOW 365

WHITE SALT-GLAZED JUG. BEAR AND DOG 372

ASTBURY FIGURE OF A PIPER : HEIGHT 6 INCHES

Falkner and Sidebotham Collection, Peel Park, Salford



Staffordshire Pots and Potters

CHAPTER I

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

AT the moment these lines are being written, Lord Hatherton makes public the news that the Duke of Sutherland has offered Trentham Hall as a gift to the Staffordshire County Council in aid of their scheme for the furtherance of higher education. The offer is princely, yet its chief significance lies in the commentary it affords on the altered conditions of life, thought, and education in the Potteries.

It is true that the Gowers have always taken a philanthropic interest in the district where they are such large owners of property, but gifts of building sites, and even the erection of fairly extensive schools, count for very little compared with the gift of this "Palace in the Woods," as Beaconsfield called it.

Outside the district immediately benefited by such generosity, appreciation is scanty, and gratitude almost non-existent. Yet the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland are really national bene-

factors, and they are by no means the first of their race to well deserve the title.

On a hill behind Trentham Wood stands, carved in stone, the effigy of the first Duke of Sutherland. There is another statue of the same Duke on another hill at Lillieshall, and yet a third on another hill at Dunrobin. In itself this is not remarkable, but the fact that they are all erected by public subscription, in recognition of public services unconnected with military "glory," is, we believe, unique in ducal records. Most people know of Blenheim, and the nation's recognition of Marlborough's services on that historic occasion. But how many people—however well versed in the history of their native country—could tell off-hand of any great public service rendered to his country by George Granville Levison-Gower, first Duke of Sutherland?

Yet this nobleman found the inhabitants of the whole county of Sutherland living in a state of semi-barbarism, and suffering in many ways from the continuance of feudal customs. He improved their social condition, relieved them from arbitrary and vexatious services, reduced their rents, increased their security of tenure, and left them to enjoy the whole fruits of their industry, after providing them with facilities for reclaiming many thousands of acres of waste land, and putting it under cultivation. He found in Sutherlandshire one bridge only, and not a single road. The second Duke found over a hundred and thirty bridges and four hundred and fifty miles of roads. This the great Duke—we use the term "great" advisedly—did in the teeth of strenuous opposition, and in the face of bitter slander—organised and disseminated by those who benefited by the existing state of things. He lived to see a happy, grateful, and prosperous people. When he died, ten thousand people attended his funeral, many

TRENTHAM HALL

Offered by the Duke of Sutherland for purposes of higher education

of them tramping scores of miles. Weeping women led or carried children that they might have the proud privilege of telling succeeding generations how they saw the last of the great Duke.

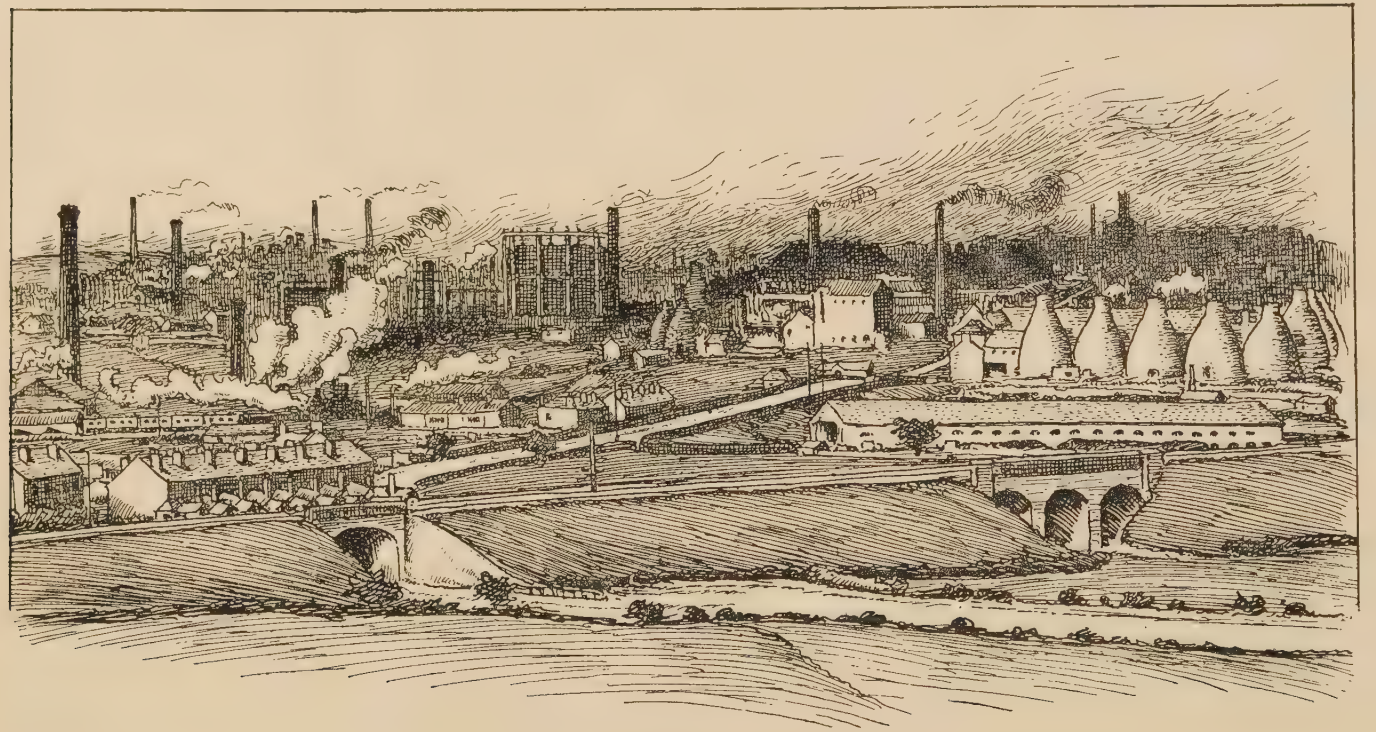
At the present time this record is appropriate, for the spirit which actuates the Duke of to-day is the same as that which prompted his Grace of 1820. The graciousness of the present Duke's offer is not lessened by the lack of anxiety on the part of the municipal authorities to increase the comfort of the Sutherland family while in residence at Trentham. They have taken no efficient steps to prevent the pollution of the Trent by sewage. This river, running under the walls of Trentham Hall, is a foul and pestilent ditch. One may stand to-day on the bridge by the park gates crossing a little tributary stream which rises in the Keele Woods, and after running through some miles of pastoral country, joins the Trent close to the Hall. On one side of the bridge we may catch occasional glimpses of trout, alert and healthy in the clear, sweet water ; on the other side we may see plainly the line of demarcation between the fresh stream and the abominable sewer called the Trent, where, one would think, hardly even a microbe could live unpoisoned. If the carven figure on the monument hill could be given sight and understanding, it would probably see little change in the prospect since the day of its erection. The slimy river looks silvery enough from that altitude and distance, and the landscape generally is unspoiled. The wood—a few hundred yards to the left, as one faces the Hall—comes right to the foot of the hill, and, further to the north, climbs quite to its summit. It is a wonderful wood for echoes, and the occasional cry of some wild creature in its depths sounds plaintive, and is prolonged and repeated uncannily. On the other side of the hill westward is

a wide sweep of woodland and pasturage, stretching across Staffordshire and Shropshire away to the Welsh mountains, which may be sometimes seen on an exceptionally clear day. There is little cultivated land on any side. Eastward, fields, woods, and pasturage, fresh enough and verdant enough, but no corn. On the horizon at the north-east the grey cone of Mow Cop rises. This hill is on the borderland of Staffordshire and Cheshire, and is the beginning of a very long ridge called Congleton Edge, which runs along for some miles until it reaches the town of Congleton. Here, as on Trentham Hill, the beacons were lit when the Armada was sighted, and the fiery message carried onward from point to point through Lancashire and Cumberland till it reached

"The burghers of Carlisle."

So this stone duke, on his eminence (within four miles, as the crow flies, from the Town Hall of Stoke-on-Trent), looks over a wide stretch of peaceful and beautiful country.

Not obtrusive or insistent, and at first hardly noticeable, will be seen at length a blackish grey streak to the north-east, something of the shape of a lizard with its tail curved. This lizard-shaped streak is the Staffordshire Potteries. The tail is Longton and Fenton, the hind-legs Stoke and Bucknall and Northwood (the two latter—the right hind-leg—tucked close to the side of the body). The body is Hanley and Burslem, the fore-legs are Longport and Smallthorne, and the head and neck Tunstall. Pittshill and Goldenhill might represent a protruding tongue. These towns and townlets generally lie along the valley. Occasionally parts of the towns cover undulating ground, but mainly they lie along the banks of the Trent or its tributaries. Along this valley the main line of



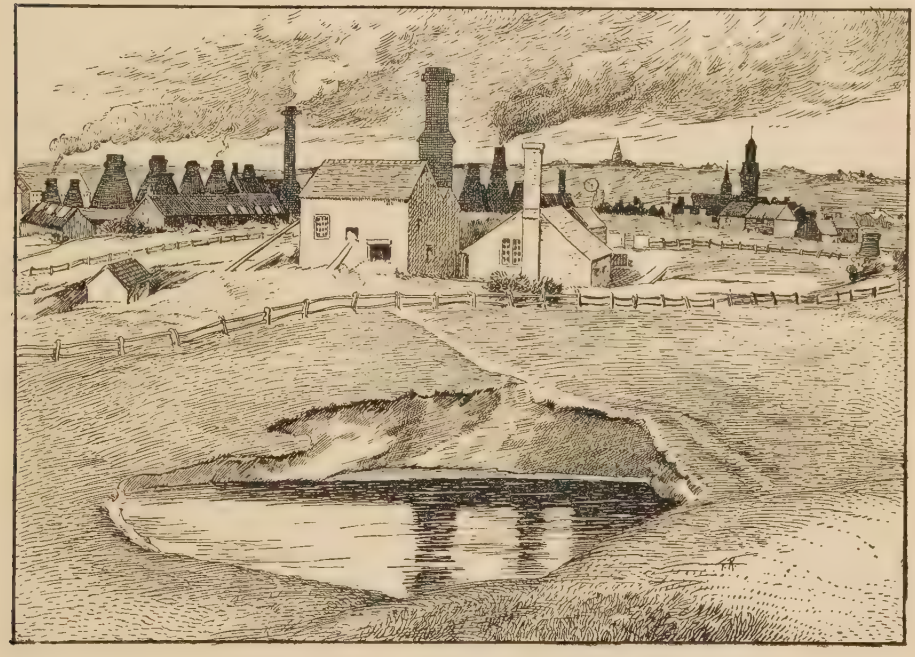
THE POTTERIES FROM HARTSHILL

the London and North-Western Railway from London to Manchester runs. A traveller by this route would form a very unfavourable impression of the Potteries if he judged by what he saw from the carriage windows. The line skirts the fringes of the towns, but actually passes through none. Even Stoke Station (which is the principal station of the local system) lies on the extreme boundary of the town, and Stoke is the only town of the group which can be seen to any extent from the railway. Longton is two miles from the main line, and the other towns, Fenton, Hanley, Burslem, and Tunstall, average a distance of over a mile each. The Trent and Mersey Canal runs parallel with the railway for many miles, and the wharves along this canal, together with the gasworks, occasional ironworks and collieries, sheds for railway stock, and the usual straggling and sometimes squalid buildings which always lie at the outskirts of a large manufacturing district, combine to create a somewhat repellent impression on the mind of the traveller who passes through—an impression, however, of a picture which is not without interest of its kind.

Smoke everywhere—from myriads of tall chimney-shafts, and from the elongated bee-hive-like ovens (whose quaint contours form an architectural feature, and give a character to the district which is quite unique), smoke from the iron-foundries and collieries dotted here and there at intervals, and which in their turn have a certain picturesqueness of their own—smoke from every house-top.

At night the scene changes in its character and presents a singularly unusual and almost weird appearance. If we shift our point of vantage at the monument to any portion of the higher ground which skirts the towns, to Penkhull, to Hartshill or Porthill, the smoke, which is such an insistent feature in

daylight, has become obscured in the darkness, and instead, we get the thousand and one lights of the towns shining like stars amid the surrounding blackness. We can trace the conformation of the streets by means of the long lines of lamps. And here and there, as greater lights among the lesser, we get the glare



FENTON MARL PITS

of the great blast-furnaces, and hear the continued boom-boom, clang-clang, bang-bang of the steam-hammers reverberating along the surrounding hills.

At a nearer view we encounter the curious phosphorescent lights of the smouldering mounds of refuse slag from the different ironworks, which are not visible in the day except in the form of little curls of smoke, but which at night are curiously uncanny, and assist in the completion of a picture which presents an image to the mind not readily forgotten.

Neither the streets, the factories, nor the people can be described in generic terms. The main streets are like the main streets of any large industrial town. The back streets and by-ways are generally far more interesting and picturesque than the back streets of Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, while slums, as understood in these cities, are unknown in the Potteries. During the lead-poisoning controversy we acted as guide to the representative of a great London daily newspaper, and he asked to be shown the "slums." We took him to those portions of the various towns inhabited by the dregs of the population, and he remarked that he had never before seen "slums" with lace and muslin curtains to the windows, where carefully tended geraniums and fuchsias were common, and where old corner cupboards and "grandfather clocks," such as he would have liked to bargain for, were frequently seen through the open doors. We expressed our regret in suitable terms for not being able to show any better examples of slums. This absence of the slums proper is, indeed, one of the most satisfactory features of the district. The factories vary from huge square brick boxes, where everything is done by machinery in the most accurate, matter-of-fact, and uninteresting fashion, to the old pottery which started two hundred years ago with a kiln and a shed, and added "chunks" of buildings haphazard and higgledy-piggledy as the business grew and as they were needed.

The black lizard of the Potteries, then, has been slowly but surely increasing in area during the past fifty years and thus gradually diminishing the space between it and the fair woodland from which our first point of vantage was taken, and but for the well-known traditional generosity of the Gowers, one might very naturally suppose that the present Duke was

making a virtue of a necessity in offering to quit Trentham, sandwiched as he is between the devil of the neighbouring iron-works, and the deep sea of the polluted Trent.* This, described in briefest terms, is the district which has become famous in the annals of the ceramic arts, and which is the scene of the labours of the brothers Elers, of Whieldon, of Wedgwood, and of Spode, and of many another whose works remain, but whose personality is unrecorded.

* At the moment of going to press comes the news that the Staffordshire County Council have found themselves unable to accept the offer of Trentham Hall for the purposes of higher education. The Education Committee proposed to use the Hall as a training college for women teachers, but, as this did not meet the views of his Grace, the negotiations fell through. Several members, however, expressing a hope that it might still be possible to accept the Duke's offer.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-ROMAN POTTER

WE have very few records of the status of the Staffordshire potter prior to the time of Queen Elizabeth. That pottery was made at a much earlier period we have abundant, if fragmentary, evidence. Saxon, Roman, and early British pottery has been found locally, together with other signs of the potter's presence.

Some urns have been found which have even been attributed to the denizens of the Stone Age. It is pretty certain that the manufacture of pottery (as an industry with any approach to organisation) was instituted by the Romans. We believe that the Romans introduced the potter's wheel in Britain, although we are aware that this is contrary to the received popular idea, and to the expressed opinion of some writers, who assume that even the early British urns and vases were fashioned on the wheel. But on a close examination of all accessible examples of pre-Roman wares found in this island, we are more than ever convinced that they are "built" wares, or wares fashioned by hand without the use of any revolving implement. Built wares are made by preparing a circular "bat" or slab of clay—like a pancake—which is intended to form the bottom of the vessel. This is placed on a board or upon a flat plane. Then a number of strips of clay are rolled between the hands, and the first is bent in circular fashion round the edge of the slab form-

THE EARLY BRITISH POTTER

ing the bottom of the vessel. It is stuck on with a thin mortar called "slip," made by the admixture of clay and water to about the consistency of cream. Another ring of rolled clay is placed on the top of the first, and made to adhere with slip in the same way, and so on, until by means of successive rings the vessel is built.

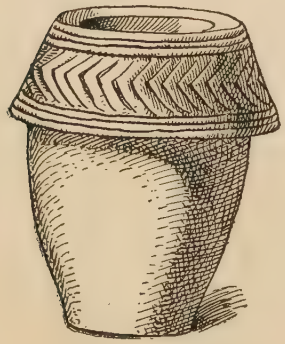
If the contour of the vessel swells, longer strips are employed, and again shortened as the vessel narrows. The general effect of the vessel at this stage resembles corduroy held in a horizontal position. The furrows are filled with thinner strips of rolled clay, pressed in with the fingers, and the whole is scraped as nearly level as possible with a flat piece of wood or a flexible piece of horn. This was the process employed by the Aztecs and their predecessors, the Tolzecs, as well as the Peruvians. At the present time, the Ceramic Schools of the United States are teaching this method of building wares. In the late Exhibition at St. Louis there were many examples, and the resemblance in several important particulars to the early British wares was very marked. The circle is frequently "out of the true," which could not happen to vessels fashioned on the wheel except by accident, when the nature of the accident would be obvious. The surface, too, in "built" wares has an entirely different quality to that given by the wheel. By far the larger number of vessels found in England which are known to belong to the pre-Roman era have a very distinctive shape, which, curiously enough, rarely or never appears in vessels of the same epoch found in Germany, Scandinavia, France, Switzerland, or Italy. It is very rarely seen in wares made during the Roman occupation of Britain, and in these rare cases may be regarded as an accidental survival.

This distinctive characteristic consists of a broad band

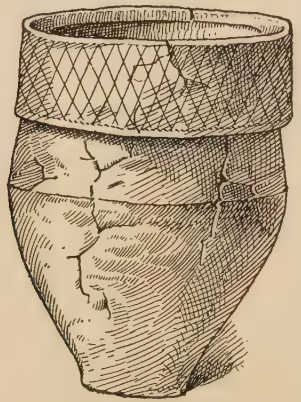
Cambridgeshire : Cup found in the Island of Ely

Yorkshire : Cup found near Pickering

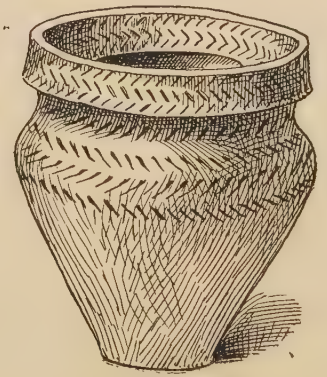
"Incense" cup found in Wiltshire



Staffordshire : Darley Dale



North Wales



Cinerary urn found at Trentham

EXAMPLES OF EARLY BRITISH FLANGED URNS

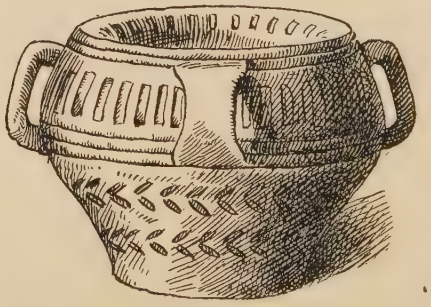
or overlapping flange (hanging or turning over like a coat-collar) from the neck to the shoulder of the vessel. It would seem to us that this device would be an ingenious expedient for concealing any irregularity or unevenness which might easily occur on the rim when the vessel was built up. A flat, thin band of clay would be beaten out to the length of the circumference of the neck, and after being cut to the required width, would be turned over the top of the neck, or left to form an added rim (which is the case in some examples), and then made to hang over to the depth desired. Waring ("Ceramic Art of Remote Ages") points out that the overhanging rim has a counterpart in the red "Aretine" or Roman ware, and he cites a specimen in the Geological Museum in Jermyn Street* which bears a mark of Aretine manufacture. This specimen was unearthed at the excavations for the railway station at Greenwich. It is plain from its stamp that it was imported into this country, and it seems very probable that occasional examples of this kind may have been brought into the country by the Phœnicians and other Continental traders who were known occasionally to visit the shores of Britain for the purpose of bartering with the half-savage natives.

Our means of ascertaining the status of the early British potter are, as we have previously remarked, very scant, and all opinions must be more or less conjectural. But conjecture, to be admissible, must be formed on some kind of evidence, and the only direct evidence available is to be obtained from records and documents, together with the evidence of the pottery itself, generally found by excavations in the vicinity of ancient mounds and burying-grounds. These discoveries only yield one class of

* All the pottery in the Jermyn Street Museum has been since removed to the British, South Kensington, and Bethnal Green Museums.

Found in a Tumulus near Throwley

From a barrow at Darley Dale



From a Tumulus at Wetton Hill, in a stone cist with skeleton

PRE-ROMAN POTS, STAFFORDSHIRE WARE

pottery—*i.e.* mortuary and cinerary vessels. Of these, we find several varieties. The larger sort were made to contain the ashes of the dead, entombed by races who practised cremation. These crematory urns are very roughly made of a coarse clay containing pebbles, and are often found inverted on a stone slab. If they happen to be placed erect, they are covered with another inverted urn. In mounds, together with these cinerary urns, are often found vessels of a low circular shape, two or three inches in height, highly ornamented, and sometimes elaborately perforated. These are usually called incense-cups, but some authorities think that they were used to carry the fire to the funeral pile. We are inclined to agree with this opinion, as the perforations would serve for the purpose of suspension by a chain, or other device, and would also, by the free admission of air, help to keep the fire alight.

In burying-grounds when unburnt remains have been exhumed, drinking-cups and food-vessels have been discovered.

There is something pathetic in the thought of the dead man or woman lying through the long centuries with the grave-pots, the uneaten food, and the untasted mead, which were placed to sustain them in their long journey to the unknown beyond. It is worthy of remark that the food and drink vessels are never found in British graves in company with crematory vessels. They are always found with unburnt bones. Both kinds of pottery, however, belonging to the same period are found, proving that earth-burial and urn-burial were practised at the same time. Whether it was a question of caste, rank, or ritual scarcely concerns us; and it is really a difficult question to determine, for both kinds of pots are often highly ornamented, and the implements of every-day use, arms, and other objects which are often found buried with the body, do not help us to any estimate

of the position of the deceased, although they are of great value in helping us to fix the period of burial.

Waring thinks that these mortuary vases were made and baked near the place of interment. This theory seems plausible for many reasons. The examples generally show unmistakable signs of having been baked in an open fire. They often exhibit blackish or reddish patches where the flame has caught or missed the surface, indicating imperfect and uneven firing. The mounds or Tumuli, too, are almost invariably in the vicinity of marl seams, and the ware is of the same character as the local clays would produce. If the marl of the district has a tendency towards brownness, yellowness, or redness, the pottery usually shows the same peculiarities. This, of course, may be accidental, but it is a point worth noting.

The personality of the potter of this period is evasive and elusive. Whether his work was a part of the symbolism and ritual of the Druid, or whether it was merely a separate and ordinary craft, we shall in all probability never know. Possibly the Druid priests, anticipating the monks of the Middle Ages, were themselves the potters, and kept the secrets of the craft (such as they were) to themselves. It has been shown, by various authorities, that the rude decorations on the mortuary vessels have a general symbolic meaning, referring to the worship of the sun, of fire, and of serpents. It is hardly likely that the exposition of this symbolism would be entrusted to a working potter, if, indeed, such a craftsman could exist in those days. The last act of the petty drama of life, the cremation, the inurning, the burial, would, in all probability, be entirely in the hands of the priests.

The mist which veils these remote ages is merciful, for while it hides from us many things we would like to know, it yet

enshrouds much that would awaken an abhorrence and disgust. The sacrifices in the depths of the shadowy woods—the insensate cruelty—the savage and bloody rites—all suggest that it is better not to know details, and to leave us with a merely æsthetic admiration of the Druid, with his long white beard and picturesque surroundings.

There is another good reason for supposing that at this period the potter was not an independent craftsman. An artificer or craftsman must have a market for his productions. The island at this period was sparsely populated, and pottery was not in general use. Domestic life—if the mode of living of the time can be dignified by such a term—was certainly primitive. Wooden platters and drinking-vessels of horn were used, and such cooking as was done was accomplished with the rudest utensils, probably of bronze. So the potter, as a tradesman, would certainly find no regular market. It is a craft so unique that it could hardly be coupled with another calling, therefore on the whole we must content ourselves with the surmise that the priests (like the monks of a later period) dominated, or at least superintended, the craft of potting.

Among the reasons for supporting this theory (and certainly not the weakest) is the absence of any family name connected with the craft. Before the introduction of Christianity and the practice of conferring baptismal names, it was the custom to call individuals by a name corresponding with some personal trait. If he was fierce, he was called after the wolf, whom (as Emerson says) he too often resembled. If cunning, the fox provided him a family name.

He sometimes, but rarely, takes the title of a special artificer. In the Saxon days this practice became common. We may form a very fair estimate of the extent of the various crafts

by the prevalence of family names denoting their use. Workers in metal were the most common, and the Saxon name Schmidt—Smiter—Smither—Smith is sufficient evidence of this. Other trades in their degree give us some clue. "Tyler" is fairly common, and "Potter" less common, but frequent enough to show that it was an acknowledged and separate craft in Saxon times. The ancient British potter, however, has left us work which, rude and fragmentary though it be, has still outlived him.

DANISH URN, ATTRIBUTED BY WORSAAE TO THE STONE AGE

CHAPTER III

THE ROMAN POTTER IN STAFFORDSHIRE

THE Cassiterides, or Tin Islands, as the British Isles were called, were mentioned by Herodotus, writing as early as the fifth century B.C.* The curiosity and cupidity of the Romans were awakened by the various references of ancient writers to these shores. Between the period of Herodotus and the time of Cæsar, fifty-five years B.C., several projects for the invasion of Britain had been mooted, but had met with little encouragement owing to the mystery in which the northern parts of Europe were enshrouded, and to an idea current among the soldiery that Britain was beyond the confines of the earth!

The story of the successive invasions of the Romans has been often told. How Cæsar, who was conducting a campaign in Gaul, conceived the idea of invading the British shores, his

* Concerning the western extremities of Europe I am unable to speak with certainty, for I do not admit that there is a river, called by barbarians Eridanus, which discharges itself into the sea towards the north, from which amber is said to come; nor am I acquainted with the Cassiterides Islands, from whence our tin comes. . . . However, both tin and amber come to us from the remotest parts. Towards the north of Europe there is evidently a very great quantity of gold, but how procured I am unable to say with certainty; though it is said that the Aramaspians, a one-eyed people, steal it from the griffins. Neither do I believe this, that men are born with one eye, and yet in other respects resemble the rest of mankind. However, the extremities of the world seem to surround and enclose the rest of the earth, and to possess those productions which we account most excellent and rare.—HERODOTUS iii., 115.

excuse being that the Britons were in the habit of assisting the Gauls in their resistance to his forces; how he prepared for the transport of two legions in ninety-eight ships; how he found the cliffs lined with armed natives who followed his ships with cavalry and chariots as he sailed along the coast to find a suitable landing-place; and how he only gained a secure footing by the narrowest chance.

The leading features of the story of this first invasion may be told in a few words. There were parleyings, envoys despatched from one party to the other, and arrangements made for the Britons to provide hostages, the delivery of which were delayed on various excuses, during which time bad weather and heavy tides played havoc with the Roman ships, which were manned by sailors unaccustomed to tidal seas.

VASE IN THE FORM OF HUMAN HEAD, DEDICATED TO MERCURY, FOUND AT LINCOLN. BRITISH MUSEUM

The Britons, quick to detect the straits of their enemies, who had no cavalry and only a limited supply of provisions, attacked a foraging party who were reaping a field of corn. Cæsar sent a relieving force to their assistance and drove away their assailants. Numbers of islanders, however, attracted doubtless by stories of the smallness of the opposing force and the richness

of the booty to be obtained, came to swell the body of resistance. There was another attack by the Romans, which ended in the defeat of the Britons, who sent envoys suing for peace, and again offering the hostages which they had conveniently forgotten. Cæsar, ready enough to make peace, demanded, however, double the number of hostages, and ordered them to be brought to his camp; but, speculating on the Britons being in no hurry to produce their hostages, and realising the peril he was in through the damage to his ships, made instant preparations for departure. He broke up twelve of his most badly damaged vessels to obtain materials for the repair of the rest, and, acting upon the principle that discretion is the better part of valour, embarked and departed at midnight. Thus ended the first Roman invasion.

In the month of July in the following year, 54 B.C., Cæsar, having during the interval made far more extensive preparations, set sail with a fleet of six hundred ships, carrying more than thirty thousand effective troops, a number of ships belonging to private owners joining him on the way. Cæsar engaged the Britons under Caswallon, an Island prince, and, although disconcerted by the quickness and dexterity of the more lightly armed Britons, the superior discipline of the Romans finally prevailed. There were again, as on the former occasion, negotiations for peace, and Cæsar, having fixed the number of hostages, demanded a certain yearly tribute, re-embarked, and made for Gaul with all speed, having remained on the island on this second occasion exactly two months.

There is no record of Caswallon's tribute ever being paid, and Cæsar's claim to a triumphal and victorious expedition is not supported by contemporary and later writers. Horace, in his Seventh Epode (40 B.C.), speaks of the "untamed Britons," and Tibullus, in the Panegyric on Messala, recommends "Britons

not yet subdued by Roman arms" as suitable subjects for that general's prowess.

In A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius, seizing upon a trivial excuse of an application for help on the part of the Britons, made preparations for another invasion, although during the interval of nearly a century which had elapsed since Cæsar's second expedition, many incidents had occurred to keep alive the interest which the Romans felt in the far-off romantic island which "lay beyond the confines of the earth."

VASE SPRINKLED WITH MICA AND STAMPED "CAMARO F. LINCOLN." BRITISH MUSEUM

We all know the long and desperate stand made by Caractacus, son of Cymbeline, and the Amazon Boadicea. Many forgotten heroes opposed valiantly, but hopelessly, the invincible organisation and iron grip of the Roman cohorts during the eighty years employed in the subjugation of the Britons. In Mona, Cambria, Northumbria, and Caledonia, fresh tribes sprang up and fought desperately for their lands, while the attenuated garrisons in the already conquered districts kept the peace with difficulty, not always succeeding. How many chiefs, whose very names are now a mere tradition, or altogether forgotten, were driven

back mile by mile, to be at last exterminated or held in hard thrall, we can only conjecture.

It was not until the time of Hadrian (117 to 138 A.D.) that a peaceful administration of the affairs of the whole country was possible. The forces had been successively governed by Plautius, Ostorius, Didius, Veranius, Suetonius, Petronius, Trebellius, Vettius, Agricola, and Sallustius with varying success, according to their personal talent or the assistance they obtained from the successive Emperors who held sway in Rome. Hadrian found the whole of the country subjugated, the people docile, the laws administered, and roads made to facilitate military operations. He found walls built, with camps and garrisons accessible for their defence, against the wild tribes which haunted the fastnesses of the Welsh and Scottish mountains, and against the prowling pirates of the North Sea. He found also a certain degree of cultivation and luxury. The richer merchants, physicians, officers and governors possessed their villas in imitation of their compatriots at home, and the usual crowds of sculptors, workers in metals and mosaics, and craftsmen generally, were in evidence everywhere. The Roman occupation of the island was complete. As Professor Church says: "Nor was this occupation simply military. It is sufficient, for proof of this, to point to the remains of such houses as are to be seen at Bignor (near Chichester) and Chedworth in Gloucestershire. It is clear that wealthy Romans took up their abode in this island; and wealthy men do not live in a country that is not thoroughly settled."

It is our business, then, to trace, as far as possible, the work of the potter during the period of occupation by the Romans, and its influence on the British potter, especially in Staffordshire.

The ware most commonly in use among the Romans was

THE ROMAN POTTER IN BRITAIN

the Aretine or Samian ware. It was made at Arretium (modern Arezzo). The paste is a fine red, of a smooth, close texture, and was covered with an extremely thin glaze, so thin, indeed, as to be nothing more than what is technically called a "smear." It was decorated with neat mouldings in relief, incised circles, and intaglio patterns.

It is frequently stamped with the potter's name; and several examples of named Aretine ware have been found during excavations, or in river-beds. Wherever the Roman legions went, a supply of their favourite Samian ware accompanied them. Inscriptions of a social or convivial character are often found on this ware, such as "Bibe Amico de Meo!"—("Drink, friend of mine!"). But in colonies like Britain, where rich beds of clay were common, the Romans were not content to pay the added expenses of importation when the ware could be made on the spot. So that wherever the legions went, a colony of potters as well as other artisans followed. This is abundantly proved by the discoveries of pottery and potters' kilns in the vicinity of all Roman camps. Numerous examples exist of pottery found near the three great centres of production, which were all close to important military settlements. The three different kinds of ware found at the Upchurch marshes in Kent, on the river Nen in Northamptonshire, and in Shropshire near the settlement of Wroxeter, or Winconium, exactly agree with the clay of the district, and neither resemble each other nor the original Samian variety, either in colour or character, beyond an unavoidable similarity in shape.

The Upchurch ware is either blackish or smoky grey in colour, while the "Castor" or Dubrivian ware of the Nen varies from a reddish brown to a dark brown, is more carefully made, and more elaborately decorated with figures and devices in relief.

The Salopian ware is of two kinds, one of a lightish red colour and the other nearly white. Dr. Birch states that potteries have been traced for twenty miles along the banks of the Nen. When the clay became exhausted at one spot, the potters moved farther along the banks of the river, leaving their warped or damaged pieces behind, in the same way as modern potters throw all cracked or imperfect pieces among the refuse on their "shord rucks." This statement of Dr. Birch

ARETINE BOWL, MARKED "OF · VITAL" (OFFICINÂ VITALIS), FOUND IN ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND, LONDON. BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM

accounts for the quantity and character of "Castor" or "Caistor" vases and pots which have been unearthed. We know, then, that the Romans introduced and organised the manufacture of pottery in Britain on no small scale. Sir L. Alma-Tadema, in his picture of "Hadrian Visiting a Pottery in Britain," shows us a pottery fitted up in a style which we feel some difficulty in realising. There is a beautiful staircase, with an elaborate panel in mosaics, and a corridor with shelved alcoves filled with examples of the potter's art. In this corridor hangs a picture of Mercury, the patron of potters and of all craftsmen.

Sir L. Alma-Tadema is so high an authority on all archæological matters, especially of this period, that we are perforce compelled to accept the various details of this picture as, at any rate, probable.

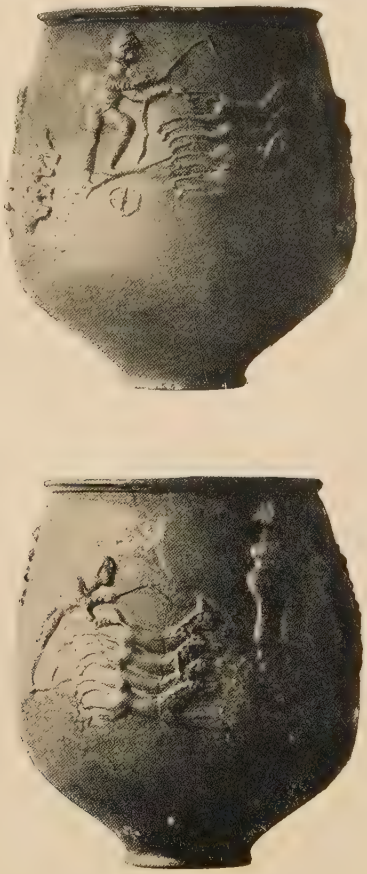
Under the arch of the gallery the potters are seen at work. They are apparently all "throwers," and about half a dozen may be discovered, although the greater part of the room is hidden from view by the arch. Without wishing to appear hypercritical, we may, however, point out that this would mean an enormous output, as a couple of throwers are sufficient for quite a large pottery, and we cannot assume that the Romans were less skilful in this branch of the art than the "throwers" of to-day.

In support of Sir Laurence, however, we must remember that Dr. Birch's description of the working-up of complete clay-beds for twenty miles along the banks of the Nen, shows that there *was* an enormous output. We can only conclude that our limited knowledge of this interesting but neglected period—and the complete lack of information respecting the habits of the Roman potters and their manner of living and working—has led us unwittingly into forming a narrow estimate of the luxury and refinement of the Romans, even in their remote colonies.

Sir L. Alma-Tadema, in a very interesting letter to us on the subject of his picture of "Hadrian," tells us that he searched and studied all the principal museums in England for the purpose of obtaining correct examples. His idea was to show a corner of the pottery which would be used partly as the classic equivalent of a modern showroom, and partly as a small museum for the guidance and education of the workers.

Mr. Percy Cross Standing, in his book on Sir L. Alma-Tadema, makes a slight and very natural mistake in saying that the idea of the picture of Hadrian was suggested by Mr. Minton.

HADRIAN VISITING A POTTERY IN BRITAIN
By Sir L. Alma-Tadema, O.M., R.A.



ROMAN CUP (TWO VIEWS), WITH CHARIOT RACE, IN SLIP
British Museum

Sir Laurence tells us that the picture was commissioned by Mr. Colin Minton Campbell (the head of the firm of Minton & Co.), who expressed a wish to his picture-dealer, Mr. McLean, that Sir Laurence should paint for him a picture dealing principally with the subject of pottery. Mr. McLean then opened up negotiations with Messrs. Pilgrim & Lefevre, and commissioned the picture through these gentlemen. Before its completion Mr. Campbell died, and his family not wishing to confirm the order, a dispute arose between the dealers. Eventually "Hadrian" was sent at an inopportune time to Christie's, and sold for less than Sir Laurence had been paid for painting it. The purchaser was also a dealer, and the fact that he tried vainly for several years to find a customer is somewhat surprising. Finding it a serious matter to have the picture remaining on his hands unsold, the dealer applied to Sir Laurence for advice, and as all available markets seemed to have been tried, Sir Laurence advised him to cut the picture in three parts, and re-line them, for him to add to them to form three separate pictures. This was done, the emperor and gallery forming one part, the potters another, and the slave ascending the staircase a third. The first two were sold in Holland, and the third (which Sir Laurence received as payment for his work on the other two) now adorns his beautiful studio in St. John's Wood, and will probably find a final resting-place in some public gallery, after the artist's death, which event, however, it is to be hoped, may be long delayed.

We have dealt with this fine work at some considerable length, since it is the only authoritative contribution to the industrial methods of that period, at any rate, connected with pottery. We may rest assured that the potteries of the Romans, like all their undertakings, were conducted on a generous scale;

but it is nevertheless true that the Romans, and even the Greeks, were never potters at all, technically, in the higher sense of the term. It goes without saying that they were excellent craftsmen and designers. Greek pottery touches the very highest point of refinement of form and design, and the potters made the most of the art in the somewhat restricted branch of ceramics which they practised. They had, however, very little experience in the mixing of pastes, and none at all in the finer grades, using chiefly raw earths, more or less finely pulverised or kneaded, and were mainly satisfied with the colour as they found it. Their pottery, in fact, was simply terra-cotta, biscuit, or glazed. The use of rich, soft, coloured enamels, as employed by the Orientals, was unknown to them. Their glazes served the purpose for which they were applied—they made the vessels water-tight. There is, however, no possibility of comparison between Greek and Oriental pottery, the qualities sought after being totally opposite.

Ancient writers frequently speak of the Murrhine Vases, the almost priceless treasures of Pompey and Nero. But as there is no single fragment in existence, and as the description given by Pliny does not help us to determine their nature, we may safely assume that the Murrhines were not made in the Roman dominions, but imported from the East. Pliny, in fact, expressly says that they came from "several parts of the Parthian kingdom, chiefly Caramania." He says that the Murrhine substance is extracted from the earth in very small blocks. The whole tenor of his description suggests that the Murrhine Vases were an unbaked natural substance. Propertius, however, speaks of "the Murrhine cup, baked in Parthian furnaces."

Savants of all ages have advanced theories concerning these vases—so esteemed by the Romans that Augustus Cæsar

retained as his share of the spoil from the Palace of Alexandria but one Murrhine cup—and they have been declared to be opaque glass, Chinese porcelain, vessels of pottery veneered with mother-of-pearl, sardonyx, Chinese soapstone or steatite, and even Derbyshire spar. Whatever they may have been, we may dismiss, as untenable, the theory that they were manufactured on Roman territory. The Romans, at any rate, were experts with the potter's wheel, and that they made the natives of the island familiar with the Roman methods of manufacture there can be little doubt.

VASE OF RED WARE WITH RAISED IMBRICATED PATTERN, FOUND IN THE UPCHURCH MARSHES, KENT. BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM

But we have, however, to reckon with one of the most amazing facts in all history—the fact that a highly cultured and ingenious people could occupy a country for nearly four hundred years, erecting magnificent buildings, establishing skilled industries, practising the fine arts with conspicuous success, bringing into social life a polish and culture unknown to other races, and then melt away like the snows of winter, leaving no trace of their culture, their language, their arts, or even of their industries. The totality of their exodus is surprising; they seem to have gone as completely as a camp of gipsies or Arabs

after a mere passing sojourn of a week. No camp-followers, no slaves, not even the dregs of the community, seem to have remained. All took their portable goods and chattels and departed. Perhaps a consideration of the circumstances will suggest some explanation.

As a writer in "Cassell's History of England" says: "It is extremely improbable that any real amalgamation of the two races ever took place, or that the Roman civilisation left any permanent effects on the British character. The Romans were, in fact, from first to last, an army of occupation among a hostile people." So that while the Romans brought with them all the advantages of their civilisation, and a more polite and a broader (if not a purer) scheme of social life, the Britons were not participators. They may have been employed by their conquerors to perform menial and servile tasks, and the coarser drudgery of common labour; but the Roman colony was a community apart, and the Briton would have little chance of learning skilled crafts, even if he had the desire. He was practically a slave, for the Roman yoke was not light. The *exceptional* Briton, who, by intercourse with his conquerors, may have become Romanised, would doubtless elect to go back to Rome with his Latin teachers and comrades. As a matter of fact, the only legacy left to the British potter by the Romans—indeed the only tangible result of Roman skill in the craft which we are now considering—was the potter's wheel.

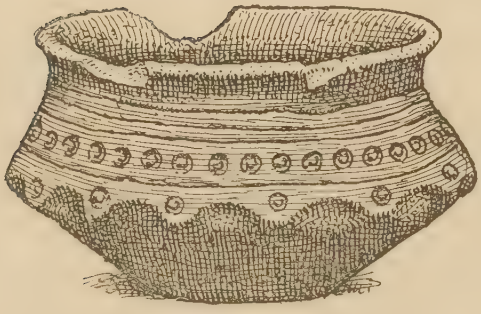
At the time of the Roman exodus the northern tribes were again becoming troublesome. They had several times defeated the Roman troops, and wild and unsettled times again obtained. There was abundance of burning, bloodshed, and laying waste, but very little making of pottery. Staffordshire had not been a great potting centre during the Roman occupation, although

numerous kilns were scattered up and down the county. During the invasion of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, the Staffordshire potter seems to have carried on, in a rude fashion, the Roman methods of potting, less disturbed by ravaging hordes than his countrymen in other districts. The reason is not far to seek. The district is sufficiently remote from any navigable river; and it was by the Tyne, the Humber, the Dee, the Severn, and the Thames, with their navigable tributaries, that the strife was hottest.

The Trent is not navigable, even by boats of shallow draught, farther inland than Burton; and, moreover, the northern part of Staffordshire was then surrounded by marsh-lands and wild forests, difficult for troops to cross; so even in those remote days the Staffordshire potter had Nature on his side—inexhaustible beds of fine clay at his feet, and natural defences around his workshop.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANGLO-SAXON POTTER



ANGLO-SAXON URN. BRITISH MUSEUM

THE great Roman road, the *Via Devana*, ran almost in a straight line from Leicester to Chester, passing through the district known as the Potteries. A little over two miles to the west of Burslem it joined Watling Street, leading to Uttoxeter, and from thence to London, Canterbury, and Dover. As far as can be ascertained, the junction of the two roads was at Chesterton, a village almost equidistant from Burslem and Newcastle-under-Lyme—the latter lying nearly due south from Chesterton. Such a position invariably formed the site of a Roman camp. The camp at Chesterton was called by the Romans, "Mediolanum." It is in this vicinity chiefly that Roman kilns have been found, together with other signs of the presence of the potter. The Rev. J. P. Conway says Chesterton "had always been a point of observation and defence in Saxon and Roman days, probably even in British, since the Romans adopted earlier British camps when feasible." Here lie rich beds of clay, not, however, peculiar to this locality, for the whole county is intersected with marl beds of fine quality; but

138284

here, we may be sure, the Roman potters worked. The Roman and heathen Saxon potters followed the camps, and the Christian Saxons the monastic houses.

The departure of the Romans in 407 left the country in a most unsettled condition. History is only seen dimly, as through a thick mist, for nearly two centuries. The Romans, we may be sure, took away everything portable, and their buildings, passing into the possession of a semi-barbarous race, would soon fall into a state of dilapidation and decay. The true Britons, Brithones, or painted folk, had been driven westward by the warlike Brigantes, who had disputed fiercely with the Romans for every inch of the Staffordshire woods and marshes.

When Constantinus the usurper withdrew the Roman legions from Britain to uphold his tottering sway, they were already seriously harassed by the repeated incursions of the Picts and Scots, and had several times suffered defeat. After their departure the marauding hosts from the north came, harried and ravaged the country, and disappeared with their spoil. They were followed by the Jutes and Angles, and afterwards by the Saxons, who all seized large portions of the unprotected coast, and gradually extended their conquests inland. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us of scores of battles with the Britons—of their victories and gradual but sure advance; but little is said of their defeats.

In 522 King Arthur comes for the moment out of the realms of fable and legend, and defeats decisively the West Saxons at Badon Hill, checking their westward and northern progress for probably ten years. But by 580 the Saxons had substantially conquered the whole of the island. As to the ultimate fate of the Britons (apart from the Welsh), authorities differ. Some think they were almost totally exterminated, and others that

there was a subsequent mingling of the races. It is certain that the laws, the language, and the religion of the conquered races disappeared, but it may be confidently assumed that extermination was occasional and local, and only adopted when resistance was unusually determined. In these dreadful times North Staffordshire was a place apart. Mercia, the settlement of the Angles in Central England, was the last kingdom to be conquered by the Saxons. The Mercians—men of the marshes—were protected in a great degree by the nature of their country, as well as its remoteness from the usual paths of the marauding hosts, and North Staffordshire was the remotest spot in Mercia. Professor Church says: "It is also probable that advance parties from the West Saxons, after these had resumed their career of conquest, came northwards. Mercia, therefore, may be regarded as mainly an Anglian settlement, but with the admixture of a certain Saxon element. It has been pointed out that in history it appears as less united in feeling and action than any other of the English States." We are safe in assuming, on these and other reasons which will be dealt with later, that a fair sprinkling of Britons remained in North Staffordshire, mingling more or less with the Angles, who appear to have met here with slight resistance, and who, in

ANGLO-SAXON URN. BRITISH MUSEUM

their turn, do not seem to have seriously opposed the Saxon stragglers.

In districts where the population was denser, and the strife more bitter, the fugitives fled for their lives to the hills and caves. Professor Church gives a quotation from a well-known writer, showing eloquently the condition of these miserable people :

" If history tells nothing of the victories that laid this great district at the feet of its conquerors, the spade of the archæologist has done somewhat to reveal the ruin and misery of the conquered people. The caves of the Yorkshire moorlands preserve traces of the miserable fugitives who fled to them for shelter. Such a cave opens on the side of a lonely ravine, known now as the King's Scaur, high up in the moors beside Settle.

" In primeval ages it had been a haunt of hyænas, who dragged thither the mammoths, the reindeer, the bisons, and the bears that growled in the neighbouring glens. At a later time it became a home of savages, whose stone adzes and flint knives and bone harpoons are still embedded in the floor. But these, too, vanished in their turn, and this haunt of primitive man lay lonely and undisturbed till the sword of the English invaders drove the Roman provincials for shelter to the moors. The hurry of their flight may be gathered from the relics their cave-life has left behind it. There was clearly little time to do more than to drive off the cattle, the swine, the goats, whose bones lie scattered round the hearth-fire at the mouth of the cave, where they served the wretched fugitives for food. The women must have buckled on hastily their brooches of bronze or parti-coloured enamel, the peculiar workmanship of Celtic Britain, and snatched up a few household implements as they hurried away.

"The men, no doubt, girded on as hastily the swords, whose dainty hilts of ivory and bronze still remain to tell the tale of their doom, and, hiding in their breast what money the house contained, from coins of Trajan to the wretched 'minims' that

EARTHENWARE PATERA.
WILTS

ANGLO-SAXON URN.
BERKS

ANGLO-SAXON URN.
OXFORDSHIRE

told of the Empire's decay, mounted horses to protect their flight. At nightfall all were crouching beneath the dripping roof of the cave or round the fire that was blazing at its mouth, and a long suffering began in which the victims lost year by year the memory of the civilization from which they came. A few charred bones show how hunger drove them to slay their horses for food: reddened pebbles mark the hour when the new vessels they wrought were too weak to stand the fire, and their meal was cooked by dropping heated stones into the pot. A time seems to have come when their very spindles were exhausted, and the women who wove in that dark retreat made spindle whorls as they could from the bones that lay about them."

Crossing the eastern boundary of Staffordshire, just over the Derbyshire border, the strife appears to have been more sanguinary, for "Thor's Cave," in a hill rising from the bed of

the Manifold,* seems to have also been used by fugitives from the Saxons. Llewellyn Jewitt describes excavations and investigations made in the cave in 1864; and after giving a detailed account of its size and appearance, goes on to say: "From the remains discovered it is evident that the cave had been occasionally occupied, or at all events used in the late Celtic, the Romano-British, the Anglo-Saxon periods, and in later times."

DIMSDALE HALL AT THE PRESENT DAY

We may be sure, then, that in all these troubled years very little pottery was made, and that, too, of the rudest sort.

* The Manifold is a Staffordshire tributary of the Dove, and doubles its volume when it joins it between Ilam and Thorpe, after emerging from Dovedale. There are several important caves on the banks of the Dove and Manifold—both Staffordshire rivers.

It was only after the establishment of the monasteries that Anglo-Saxon pottery began to be produced on any scale of importance. Numbers of mortuary urns and vessels of undoubted Saxon origin have been unearthed, but these are identical with the North German wares of the same period. Between the years 630 and 640 Christianity began to spread rapidly, Mercia, however, remaining obstinately heathen; and it was not until 655 that the old king, Penda, began to tolerate the introduction of the new faith. He had opposed it fiercely, savagely attacking such of his neighbours as made an open profession of their belief; but after his death the work of conversion became general.

The potters of Chesterton continued their work, notwithstanding the general unrest. At irregular intervals all along the neighbourhood of the great Roman road, other kilns burned, probably as far as Stoke and beyond; but we only know that in this direction they went as far as Wolstanton, turning abruptly to the east, and occurring in a scattered fashion at Longbridge Heyes, or, as it was then called, Ravensdale, and Longport, and again at Brownhills and Tunstall. Some writers think that Anglo-Saxon or Roman kilns existed at Dimsdale, a place of which we shall have much to say later, as the residence and warehouse of the Elers brothers in the seventeenth century. The present building, Dimsdale Hall, is a brick mansion of the Tudor period, the back portion being half-timbered fourteenth-century work.

On this spot stood St. Wulstan's Priory. The Staffordshire saints were all credited with miraculous attributes. The story of Wulstan's appointment to the Bishopric of Worcester is sufficiently well known—how the king appointed a rival bishop, and how Wulstan meekly laid down his crozier on a tombstone,

and the usurping bishop tried to take it up and found it inseparable from the stone on which it lay. It is a variation of the old stories of the sword Excalibur, the sword of Rustum, and a score of others similar. Of course Wulstan lifted it in the most ordinary and matter-of-fact way possible, and was allowed to retain his bishopric.

Not so well known, perhaps, is the miraculous character of St. Chad, who lived near the Pool at Lichfield, and was sustained by the milk of a white doe. One day St. Chad wandered into the forest in search of his doe, which had strayed. Wulfade, a son of the heathen King Wulfere, happened to be in the forest hunting, and, seeing the doe, followed it. It led him to a cell where he found the devout saint at his devotions. The result of the meeting was the ultimate baptism of Wulfade and his brother Rufin. King Wulfere is said to have lived near Stone, a few miles southward from the Potteries, and the story tells how St. Chad took up his residence near them in order to superintend the religious education of the brothers. The fact of their conversion becoming known to Wulfere, he is said to have followed and slain them, one at Burston and the other at Stone.

Afterwards he became remorseful, and for the ease of his conscience he sought out the saint. He found him in his cell hanging his vestments to dry in the sunlight. Doubtless he received the absolution he desired.

St. Wulstan is, however, more intimately connected with the pottery district. The pretty village of Wolstanton (now a flourishing township) takes its name from him. The surname of Wooliscroft, or Wolstonecraft (one evidently a corruption of the other), is directly derived from the immediate locality. It is a rare surname elsewhere, but becomes more and more common

up to the very gates of Wolstanton Church. The name Wooliscroft, spelt also with two l's (Wulstans-croft, Wolstone-craft, Wooliscroft), may be seen to-day on no less than seven shop and other signs in the main street of the village. This matter of nomenclature is really more important than it appears at first sight, and the prevalence of certain names in particular localities has often an important significance.

The point is so truly, if humorously, put in a recent article by Mr. G. K. Chesterton, that we have no hesitation in quoting him:

"Remember that in simpler societies the names spoken or written are living and significant. Nowadays a man's name may be John Baker; it is a convenient ticket, but it is a totally unmeaning one. But when the man's name was John *the* Baker, it was not a mere ticket at all. It was a description, it was almost a short story. Nowadays a man's address may be Elm Gardens, without an elm for miles; it is an address and nothing more. If a mediæval man was said to live by the elms, it was more than an address; it was a landscape. The signature of an educated man is a symbol; the cross made by an illiterate is also a symbol, and a much more sublime one. When a modern makes a signature he makes something he hardly understands. He can write his name undoubtedly; but can he really read it?"

In the Romish calendar are many English saints of this period. Christianity, which brought a long period of peace to England generally, kept the borders of Mercia seething. It is to be noted that one little potting corner of Mercia, the district now known as the Potteries, retained its immunity from serious strife. We find Wulfere trying to extend his power westward by attacks on the Welsh.

The scene of several of these battles was in Shropshire, the

borders of which county lie only a few miles from Chesterton, which is also near the southern boundary of Cheshire. Penda, the father of Wulfere, had, a year or two before, allied himself with Cadwalla against Edwin of Northumbria, whose army was defeated, and Edwin slain. He was succeeded by Oswald, a firm Christian. East Anglia acknowledged Oswald's supremacy,

ANGLO-SAXON URN BURIAL, AS DESCRIBED BY J. B. WARING

and Penda at once marched against the East Anglians, routed them, and slew their king, Sigebert.

Oswald marched against the conquerors, and met them at Maserfield, a place which has been variously located as being in Shropshire, in Lancashire, and Yorkshire. The exact locality of the battle is not positively known, but Oswald was slain; and in North-East Shropshire, and even on the Staffordshire borders of that county, there existed a tradition within the memory

of living persons regarding Oswald's (sometimes pronounced *Osbild's*) hand. It divided honours with the "hand of glory," and was credited with similar powers. The person who found "Osbild's" hand—which, like the Holy Grail, was supposed to bear a charmed existence—could command wealth, happiness, and immunity from temptation. It is curious that the people among whom the tradition found currency knew nothing of its meaning or origin, which has its rise in a legend telling of Oswald hearing of a crowd of poor waiting at the gate while he sat at table with St. Aidan. He directed that the viands prepared for the guests should be given to the supplicants; and he took a large silver dish from the table, and, breaking it into small pieces, distributed them as alms. Thereupon St. Aidan, taking the king's right hand in his own, exclaimed, "May the hand that has done this thing never decay."

When Oswald fell in the battle with Penda, that savage king caused the limbs of the dead Oswald to be exposed on stakes till they rotted away. After this happened, the right hand was found to be entirely untouched by corruption.

Near Ellesmere, in Shropshire, is St. Oswald's College, and it is claimed by the people of this district that the battle between Oswald and Penda was fought at Oswestry, some eight or ten miles away. This is very probable, but there is no record or trace of the superstition of "the hand" ever being current here. It was, as far as we know, confined to the neighbourhood of Mucklestone, Maer, Ashley, Blore Heath, and "the Loggerheads." It is possible that Penda, on his way back to Mercia, might have brought the body of Oswald and exposed it on some eminence on the borders of the two counties, such as the Maer Hills or the Loggerheads.

After the universal adoption of the Christian faith, we cease

to find mortuary pottery, and must look to ecclesiastical records and to such descriptions of domestic custom as are accessible. In order to discover with any degree of accuracy the extent of the Roman influence on the Saxons, we have to compare accounts of the manners and customs of the Saxons before they settled in Britain, with their customs and habits after their conquest of our British forefathers. The best and almost the only record is the poem of Beowulf. It is in pure Anglo-Saxon, and bears every evidence of having been written before the invasion of these shores. Like all works of its time and class, it is heroic in type, dealing with terrific combats with dragons and other monsters; but it gives us a clear insight into the domestic life of the Anglo-Saxons before they left their native country. In it we are told that King Hrothgar caused a house to be built, "a great mead-hall," for a royal residence and citadel. The chambers and bowers, the tapestried walls, the "variegated floors," are all described, together with the arms, jewellery, and domestic utensils. Detailed examples do not concern us here, and it is sufficient to say that here is enough evidence to show that the social and domestic conditions in Britain were little influenced by their Roman predecessors. Here and there we find that industrial types established by the Romans were continued or adopted by the Saxons.

The Harleian MS. in the British Museum shows us a drawing of an Anglo-Saxon house covered with roofing-tiles of distinctly Roman origin, and there is a portico and a kind of circular tower with a cupola of later Roman or Byzantine character. Among the Harleian, Cotton, and King's MSS. may be found numbers of illustrations of the Saxons at table, and from these we can form a good idea of their vessels and other utensils. Many of these vessels bear more or less resemblance

to the urns found in the graves, but no doubt can be entertained that the more prized vessels were not of pottery, which was reserved for the manufacture of the humbler domestic utensils.

CINERARY URN OF UNUSUAL SHAPE, ANGLO-SAXON. BRITISH MUSEUM

Sufficient documentary evidence is available to show the kind of vessels most esteemed. Turner has collected, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," quite a number of lists of household and table vessels. He gives a will, in which is notified the bequest of a golden cup, with a gold dish: "a gold cup of immense weight," a dish adorned with gold, etc. Mentions of silver cups and basins are of frequent occurrence; vessels of bronze, glass, and horn were plentiful; the latter especially are often cited in documents of the time. The drinking-horn was in common use. Nearly all the drinking-vessels were made without feet, to prevent their being laid down before they were emptied. From this circumstance, doubtless, the modern term "tumbler" is derived. Ale and mead were the liquors chiefly drunk by the Saxons. The Domesday Book shows us that a vast quantity of honey was produced in this country; and this, we may assume, was employed mainly in the preparation of their favourite beverage.

The drinking-horns were extremely varied in size, shape, and value, some being merely cut and polished, while others

were mounted elaborately in precious metals, often set with gems. The Mercian king Witlaf gave to the abbey of Croyland the horn from his table, "that the elder monks may drink from it on festivals."

In the will of a Saxon lady two buffalo horns are mentioned; and we find enumerated among the effects of several inventories, "horns worked in gold and silver." Potting therefore was, up to this period, a plebeian art, and contributed nothing to the treasured effects of the noble and wealthy.

The ordinary pottery was employed for domestic purposes, apart from the table, and consisted of articles too large to be conveniently fashioned of glass, horn, or metal—milk-pans, water bottles, cruches, steins, flasks, and bottles, as well as large jars or flasks for the storage of mead. Dishes of pottery were sometimes used for large viands, for bread, and for fish.

ANGLO-SAXON PITCHER. BRITISH MUSEUM

The Saxon term *disc* (if not the article itself) is undoubtedly borrowed from the Latin *discus*. Although pottery played a somewhat vulgar part in the Saxon household, it was used extensively, as the number of modern terms borrowed from the Saxon vocabulary (or of Saxon origin) shows. *Crocca*, a pot

or pitcher, is the source of the modern term "crockery." *Bolla* is a bowl, *flaxe* a flask, and *hnœp* (since distorted into "hanap," but pronounced by the Saxons "cnup"—pronounced gutturally) is the origin of cup. *Panna* (a pan) and *cytel* (kettle) refer more exclusively to articles fashioned of metal, but serve to show how many of our common names for domestic utensils are derived from Saxon sources. The Saxons greatly prized glass vessels, and were very expert in their manufacture. Their "beaded glass" is often mentioned, sometimes almost affectionately.

It is a matter for wonder that nations skilled in the manufacture of fine glass should exhibit such poverty in the range and quality of their glazes as applied to pottery, but the fact remains in the case of the Saxons, as well as the Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians.

We may assume, therefore, that the Anglo-Saxon potter was a *ceorl*, or churl, working mainly under the shadow of the monasteries. We can imagine him, with his wheel and rude bench of wood, with his clay-pit close to a pool or stream, and his kiln probably built in the side of a bank, in which thatched poles are stuck to form rude sheds for the protection of his fuel and a drying-place for his pots in inclement weather. We may imagine him taking orders for roofing-tiles, and sometimes even bricks. We can fancy the seneschal coming to see that the pans for the hflord's buttery are the right shape and capacity, and the sub-prior coming to bargain for the cider-flasks which Brother Osric saw yesterday in passing. We see, in our mind's eye, the serfs or *theowas* digging the clay or beating it with huge wooden mallets, or staggering under a load of wood from the forest edge or the nearest copse, while the potter himself goes into his house or a special store-room

to select certain carved stamps of wood or bone to impress the patterns round his urns or flasks.

The Saxon potter has gone, giving way to better craftsmen, and he has left few surviving tokens of his presence. It is even questionable whether he had any part in the evolution of present-day ceramics, seeing that his methods were displaced by those introduced by his Norman conquerors. But, at any rate, he worked the clay-beds, and provided at least a site for his successors.

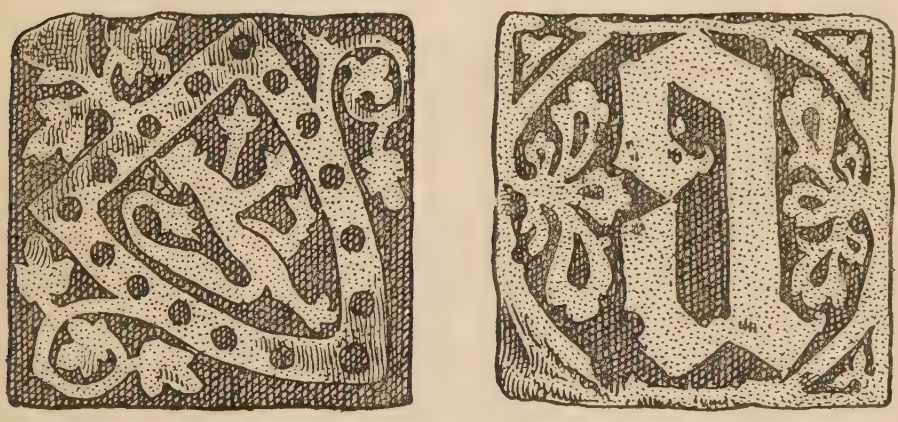
CHAPTER V

THE NORMAN POTTER

WITH the introduction of Christianity into Britain the practice of urn burial ceased. The Dane calls for no more than a passing mention. He was merely a buccaneer and brigand, having little use for pottery, and what little he required he took. Sweyn, literally Swine (happily named), ravaged, harried, and slaughtered with insensate fury, until he was very properly slaughtered in his turn. The Danes do not seem to have set up any claim to any sort of social superiority, or to have in any way treated the Saxons as an inferior race. As a matter of fact the Saxons were not inferior. They were a vanquished people; and the Danes, having all that they wanted, viz. the spoils of victory, mingled freely with the Saxons, and their descendants were gainers thereby. On the other hand, the area of Danish occupation, though wide enough, was not universal, and many districts were practically untouched by the Dane. They overran Mercia, suppressing or destroying the monastic establishments, but they do not appear to have settled north of Lichfield in any numbers.

North Staffordshire shows no traces of Danish occupation. The potter, deprived of the protection and patronage of the monastic establishments, would naturally lose the better portion of his trade. But it was impossible for him to move from place to place like a travelling tinker; he must remain in

the neighbourhood of his kilns and clay-beds, and he would probably still make brine-jars for the swineherd, large bottles or pans for mead, and coarse milk-pans and water-pots for the farmer. After the Norman Conquest the whole order was changed. The volatile and luxurious Norman introduced new methods and processes, and we find after the Conquest the first attempts to develop the potter's limited range of colours by the use of metallic oxides for staining purposes. We have no proof that encaustic tiles were made in England before the



MEDIÆVAL TILES. BRITISH MUSEUM

thirteenth century, but there is just reason to assume that the Norman monks who came over with William understood the process of manufacture and employed it intermittently, although all trace of their work in England is lost.

After the Conquest, William's Palace at Caen was decorated with encaustic tiles of monastic manufacture. In his guard-chamber eight rows of tiles were laid, charged with different coats-of-arms, generally said to be those of the families who attended Duke William in his invasion of England. Lord Henniker, describing them, says: "The intervals between the

rows (of armorial tiles) are filled up with a kind of tesselated pavement, the middle whereof represents a maze or labyrinth. The remainder of the floor is occupied with small squares of different colours, placed alternately, and formed into draught or chess boards, for the amusement of the soldiery while on guard." These tiles are now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries. Here we have proof that the Normans made encaustic tiles after the Conquest, two hundred years before the date of the Worcester, Exeter, and Ely specimens. The date of these latter tiles is the date of the cathedrals themselves, and the tiles exist simply because the cathedrals are preserved. We may reasonably suppose that earlier specimens have disappeared with the buildings in which they were fixed, and that the craft was handed down from generation to generation by the tile-makers who worked for the Conqueror; but were only produced on the magnificent scale familiar to us when the magnitude of the buildings demanded it. The Norman tiles were always made in the vicinity of the religious houses, if not in the monasteries themselves. Kilns have been discovered in Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Wiltshire, Shropshire, and Gloucestershire, and always close to an ecclesiastical settlement. The tiles at Lilleshall Priory, on the Staffordshire borders of Shropshire, may be said to be made by Staffordshire potters, so that we may reasonably look for our Norman potter under the shadow of the monasteries, especially if the latter are in close proximity to clay-beds.

As we have previously intimated, the earliest known Staffordshire kilns were at Chesterton. This village was originally a Roman camp, and afterwards a Saxon settlement. Norman William built here a strong stone castle—one of many scattered over the country—for the purpose of overawing the Saxon earls and hinds. Henry I., the Conqueror's younger son, coming to

the throne in 1100, strengthened his father's castles, or built them afresh.

The strong place of Chesterton fell short of the Norman idea of a fortress. The Rev. J. P. Conway says it lacked the deep moat. He is surely mistaken in giving this as a reason, as the moat is at present well stocked with fish, and is still, after nearly a thousand years, fairly deep.

Be this as it may, Henry chose a site two miles farther south, on a hillock rising from the banks of the Lyme brook, one of the sources of the Trent. The moat, deeper and wider than the Chesterton moat, was supplied with water from the brook, which was perhaps an advantage in view of a possible siege. Between 1120 and 1130 the old stronghold at Chesterton was dismantled, and its occupants, with their families, moved to their new centre called Neufchastell-sous-Lyme. From that time Newcastle became a place of great strength and importance, second only to Lichfield in the county, and belonging directly to the Crown. King Stephen bestowed the castle and manor upon Ranulf de Gervous, Earl of Chester, with the manor of Keele. From a wild stretch of forest and marsh the pottery district now became an important military centre, for it must be remembered that Newcastle is only two miles from Stoke and Hanley, the site of a struggle between Matilda and Stephen, and a stopping-place for royalty on their visits to Chester and the North. We find numerous allusions in the Pipe Rolls of Richard I. and John, referring principally to grants of money "by royal brief," for "repair of the tower and castle bridge," "for upkeeping of the King's mill," "for upkeeping of sentinels to Newcastle-under-Lyme," etc.

During this time the potter certainly made his pots, for clay-pits were worked and kilns fired. But for several centuries

he has left no record. Broken pitchers and rude bowls, jugs, and dishes have been unearthed, as well as pilgrim-bottles with loops for suspension by means of a leather thong, which have been assigned to various periods; but none of these can be rightly said to be outside the realms of surmise. The earliest mediæval examples of pottery which are fully authenticated are

PITCHERS, ELEVENTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES. GUILDHALL MUSEUM

the jugs and pitchers found containing coins and documents. Of these there are several in the British Museum, one found with coins of Henry III. and Edward I., and another containing a document of the reign of Henry V.*

In considering the date of the coins as evidence, it must not be forgotten that while the ware manifestly cannot be of later date than the coins, it *may* be earlier. We have numbers

* British Museum, Cases 1 and 2, B. 10, Shelf 6; B. 19, Shelf 6; B. 11 and B. 12, Shelf 5.

of illustrations of vessels of the earlier Norman period in the manuscripts of the time, but it cannot always be determined whether these vessels are of metal or other material than pottery, except by comparison of the general shape and character with such pieces as are extant—a very speculative process at best. The long hiatus in the records of pottery manufacture does not prove that no pottery, or even less pottery, was made.

We have an abundance of examples of Anglo-Saxon ware, but it is either all mortuary pottery or domestic ware buried with the cinerary urns; and but for its having escaped destruction by being buried in their cemeteries, we should have had as little record of the Saxon potter as we have of the Norman.

We get some slight idea of the vessels used from the literature and illustrated manuscripts of the time. The cups, pitchers, and dishes, as well as the ewer and basin used for washing the hands (a very necessary operation when one considers their manner of eating), may be reckoned to be of pottery, for the chroniclers are always careful to tell us when they are of metal, even of the less precious kinds. In a manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, preserved in the British Museum, there is a drawing of a regal banquet. The carver is holding the meat with his fingers. This is in accordance with the rules given in the ancient "Boke of Kervyng," where the "kervyr" is told: "Set never on fyshe, flesche, beest, ne fowle, more than two fyngers and a thombe."

In this drawing there are no plates on the table, and the guests seem to have eaten with their hands, and to have thrown the refuse on the table, or to the troops of dogs that were always admitted. In another drawing of the time, now in the national library at Paris, the table is strewn with fish-bones and other refuse. The water-bearer, with another attendant

carrying a towel, was always in attendance, so that the guests could wash their hands at will. It is a curious circumstance that the cleanliness of the tablecloth should have been a matter of pride, for it must have been anything but clean *after* the banquet.

It is some relief to know that there were limits to the general license. In the "Boke of Curtsaye" a guest is expressly cautioned against the objectionable habit of spitting:

> "If thou spit upon the borde or elles opone
> Thou shalt be holden an uncurtsaye mon."

This is, of course, an extreme instance; but there is no doubt that the table manners of the Middle Ages did not err on the side of extreme fastidiousness.

We may gather from a comparison of the illustrations in Norman MSS. with the existing examples in the British Museum that lavatory vessels, wine and beer flasks, and jugs and pitchers, were made of pottery, and were in general domestic use.

The green glaze made from copper oxide first came into use in England about this time. It seems probable that the glaze was galena, stained with crushed copper ore. The introduction of these improvements—elementary as they may seem to us—point to monkish influence; and these smatterings of chemistry, primitive as they may be, would be unlikely to be introduced by the ordinary potter.

Newcastle was a deanery, including Stoke, and Congleton in Cheshire. The Priory of the Black Friars at Newcastle was an establishment of considerable importance. No less than five cardinals were drawn from its ranks, and St. Thomas Aquinas was one of their institute.

Three miles to the south lay Trentham Priory, and still

MEDIÆVAL HARVEST FLASK
Hanley Museum

"ENCAUSTIC" TILES, ABBEY HULTON
Hanley Museum

another four miles southward—the Priory of Stone. The latter establishment was closely connected with the house of Stafford, the members of which were buried there for many generations. A tablet on the Priory wall recorded in quaint doggerel rhyme the burial of a long list of Staffords. The following are brief quotations from this tablet:

> Sir Edward Stafford, I wis
> In this church in St. Peter's aisle, buried he is,
> And Sir Thomas of Stafford his son also
> In the same aisle is buried, a little from his father fro.

And

> And his brother Sir Hugh, the Lord Bouchier
> Is buried in the south side of this quier,
> Beside his father Earl Hugh as you may see
> In a fair new tombe here buryed is he.

The Staffords became Dukes of Buckingham, and after the attainment of this dignity seem to have experienced nothing but ill-fortune, scarcely one of them dying in their beds; until, by the animosity of Wolsey, the dukedom was lost.

Another religious establishment in the near vicinity of the Potteries was the Abbey at Hulton, a couple of miles eastward from Hanley. Near all these monastic settlements kilns have been found, or "wasters" excavated. "Wasters" are imperfect or damaged pieces of pottery which are considered unfit for sale, and are generally thrown away on a "shraff heap," or "shard ruck," thus proving the vicinity of a pottery. A number of fragments discovered on the site of Hulton Abbey are in the South Kensington Museum.

We may, then, assume with confidence the following—that in England generally, the Norman potter entirely superseded the Saxon; but that, in the Staffordshire Potteries and district,

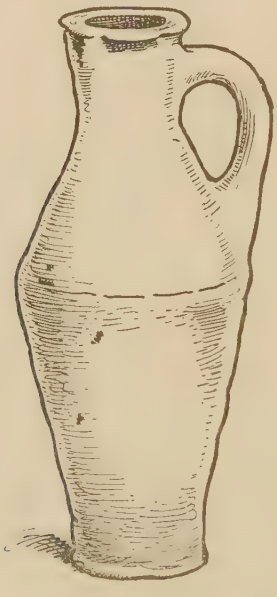
the Saxon potter came under the influence of the monks as workman and pupil, but remained Saxon. He is Saxon still to-day. The Romans left him; the Danes passed him by, or settled too sparsely to make any impression on his personality. The Norman settled in the strongholds of Tutbury, of Newcastle, of Heleigh, and of Alton, with his retinues, and lorded it over the Saxons, whom he regarded as an inferior race. There was no mingling and no absorption, and the Fitzherberts and other great county families are to-day the direct descendants of the Norman landlords. Staffordshire is still peculiarly Saxon. Its dialect consists largely of old Saxon words, which are, however, unfortunately dying out; but many phrases and words are in use to-day which were familiarly used a thousand years ago. As late as 1400 we find in the Plea and Pipe Rolls, and all documents appertaining to the time, that the common names of the people were almost exclusively Saxon—Christian and surname. The only exceptions are the feudal lords, or their retainers. Even the chief landowners (outside the nobles) are plainly Saxon. They sometimes use the Norman prefix "de," but the name itself is palpably Saxon—as John de Cnocton (now Knutton), William de Hanleg (now Hanley), and Langeton (now Longton). The women's names were Alota, Alda, Amice, Avice, Bertred, Dyonissia, Erneburga, Elysandra, Elysanta, Felicia, Geva, Gunilda, Hawise, Helenise, Isolda, Licorice (very common), Lettice, Petronilla, Loretta. Very rarely do we find Joan, Matilda, or Sybil—common among the Norman women.

Some four or five of the Saxon names quoted are occasionally borne by North Staffordshire women to this day. The true potter is Saxon in name, in speech, in physique, and in temperament. The racial distinctiveness is dying away; but the Saxon type can be repeatedly detected any time in a walk

through the streets of the Potteries, especially in Longton. The rubicund face, the solid figure, the reddish, auburn, or sandy hair, and the stolid demeanour still survive. The potter inherits the intense conservatism of his ancestors. He has ingenuity of a phlegmatic kind, which he applies rather to the perfection and development of existing methods than to the invention of new ones. He hesitates to adopt fresh principles or theories, but watches keenly the results of their adoption by others, and is quick to avail himself of their advantages if successful. He has a blunt, Rabelaisian humour. If its point does not penetrate, it hits the mark. He is fond of practical jokes, horseplay, and "sport." He is a connoisseur of dogs, pigeons, rabbits, and gamecocks, and was until recently an expert poacher. His physique is above the average of the ordinary artisan (as we shall show later), notwithstanding the Blue Books and Mr. John Burns, who once saw an excursion party from the Potteries to London, and described the members generally as being "shaped like champagne-bottles." It is a curious fact that this particular excursion was from a local brewery, and probably included few potters or none at all.

To sum up, then, the Normans suggested new possibilities in ceramics to the Saxon potter, and new uses for crockery. The Norman could not change the Saxon's methods any more than he could change his language; the absorption was all on the side of the Saxon. Norman words were engrafted on the Saxon stock; the language remained. It was rendered more expressive and picturesque by the Norman additions; but, although the aristocracy spoke French exclusively for a long time, the Saxon was the more virile tongue, and the Saxon character the more stubborn, so that Saxon became the language of the State and of the national literature. So it was with

pottery. The Norman taught the Saxon potter how to extend his sphere of operations, to enrich his palette, to vary his processes, and develop his decorations. The Saxon, according to his way, adopted the improvements cautiously, rejecting what was superficial and what did not agree with his temperament; working slowly, until his work culminated in the slip decorations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—surely as unique, individual, and truly national as the pottery of any time.



SMALL EWER, THIRTEENTH CENTURY. FOUND IN LONDON WALL. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

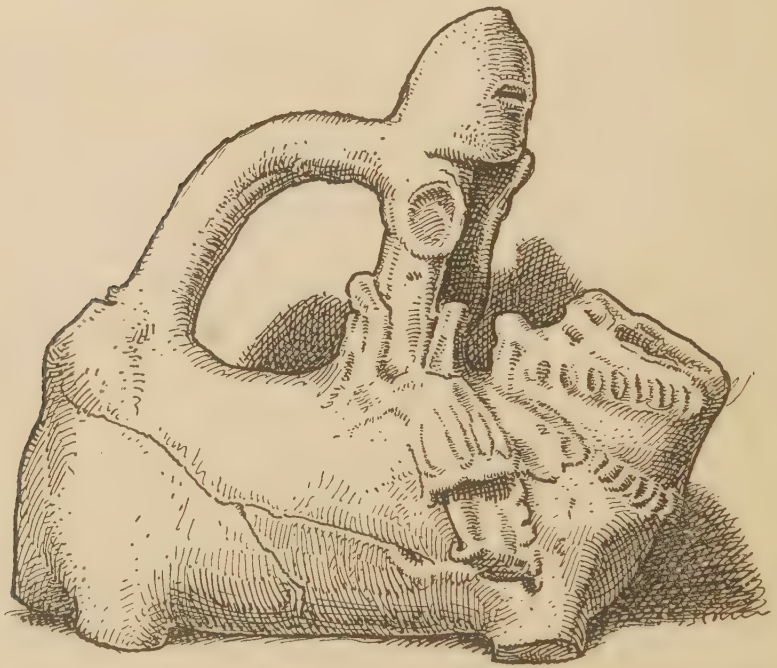
CHAPTER VI

MEDIÆVAL POTTERY

WHILE the mediæval potter confined himself generally to the production of articles of every-day use, there were two kinds of pottery on which he employed all the resources of his craft. One of these sprang from the custom, common throughout Europe, by which poor artificers of all kinds made presents to the nobles, under whose protection they worked, of special examples of their craft. Some of the examples remaining to us are decorated with heraldic devices, no doubt the cognisance of the noble who was the recipient of the gift. The special character of these pieces would partly account for their preservation, while the ordinary domestic wares, being easily replaced, would sooner or later be broken and thrown away.

These special wares are of several kinds ; some are of ordinary buff or red terra-cotta, others are smeared in patches with the green glaze already mentioned, and in some cases the green glaze is applied pretty evenly. Some pieces are of a blackish brown, owing perhaps to the natural presence of manganese and iron in the marl. The shapes are varied, and generally not inelegant. In some cases considerable fancy and some humour have been exercised on the design of these pots. Some are in the form of knights or friars, and others have rough faces and masks impressed on their surface by stamps, themselves modelled in the clay and baked. At Lewes an extremely curious jug or ewer

was found in 1845. It is in the shape of a knight on horseback, and is covered with the well-known green glaze. It is probably of the period of Henry II., and is now in the South Kensington



VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A KNIGHT, *c.* 1320. FOUND AT DITCHINGHAM, NORFOLK

Museum. Another very perfect specimen of this period is a jug in the Willett Collection. This is decorated roughly with little pellets and strips of clay stuck over the surface, and impressed with patterns by a notched stick. This process is varied by scratching and incisions, and also by bits of clay flattened between the fingers and shaped like rude leaves. These are sometimes stuck on to overlap each other, and arranged over a considerable portion of the surface of the vessel, giving it something of the appearance of a pine-cone. Many examples of mediæval ware are to be found in the British and South

Kensington Museums, and they include jugs, pitchers, costrels (or pilgrim-bottles), beer-mugs, trays, cooking-vessels, pipkins, bleeding- and shaving-cups, money-boxes, bird-trays, and even saucepans and frying-pans.

Some writers have professed to trace the work of the Staffordshire potter directly through the Norman, Saxon, Danish, and Roman eras; but there are many gaps which may only be covered by surmise. It is, however, fortunate that we have

NORMAN GREEN-GLAZED EWER, FOUND AT LEWES IN 1845. FROM ORIGINAL IN SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

direct evidence of the working of the Staffordshire potter throughout the Middle Ages. Among other records we have an entry in a book of household accounts of a payment by Sir

John Howard, in the year 1466, of four shillings and sixpence to one of the potters of Horkesley. As before stated, we have more specimens of the more ambitious kinds of pottery, but there is no doubt that the domestic wares we have indicated were made in much larger quantities, although they would not be preserved with equal care, or their period of manufacture approximated so nearly.

The other notable departure from the every-day goods of common use were the so-called encaustic tiles. Mr. R. L. Hobson, of the British Museum, rightly points out that the word "encaustic" is ill-considered. He says that its literal meaning, "burnt in," is superfluous if applied to the tile in the sense of being burnt in the kiln, a process taken for granted in connection with any kind of pottery. If, on the other hand, it is meant to apply to the slip ornament that is burnt in the intaglios which have impressed patterns, it is not so suggestive or descriptive a word as *inlaid*. We prefer the latter word because it has been generally adopted and is understood to indicate a particular kind of tile. There is no doubt that encaustic tiles were made certainly as early as the twelfth century, and we have evidence that their manufacture was a secret of the monks, or was, at any rate, controlled by them.

Many writers have expressed surprise "that the Religious Orders, who during the same century produced the beautiful encaustic tiles so conspicuous for artistic and technical perfection, did not produce vessels of beautiful form and ornamentation." This, however, should occasion no surprise. In those days it was considered a waste of artistic effort to apply artistic skill to a vulgar material, and the best powers of their craftsmen were expended on the precious metals, ivory, or, at least, marble and the rarer kinds of wood. Marble was difficult to procure,

and the common tiles used by the builder too plebeian, so the idea of inlaying the tiles with different designs and colours would naturally be evolved.

It cannot be supposed that, while the monks worked in clay, they would make nothing but tiles, and never be tempted to make vessels of pottery. They used crockery, and had kilns and clay, and were altogether too thrifty to neglect the opportunity of making at least a part of their domestic vessels instead of buying them. We know that at any rate one Order of friars, the Cistercians, made *both tiles and vessels of pottery*. In the ruined Cistercian abbeys of Yorkshire, pottery of an unusual kind has been commonly found, differing from other pottery of the period, and peculiar to the establishments of the Order. The pottery was evidently made exclusively for use in the abbeys and monasteries, since it has not been found elsewhere. But it is by no means certain that many of the monasteries did not actually sell pots of their own make; for we find the monks trading in *tiles* with the laity—articles which we might well imagine would meet with a less ready market than ordinary pottery. In 1210 a statute of the Cistercian Order was issued, rebuking the Abbot of Beaubec "for having *for a long time* allowed his monk to construct, for persons not belonging to the Order, pavements that exhibit levity and curiosity."

We see here proof of the theory that the making of these tiles was a secret of the monks, who probably added largely to their revenues when they were lucky enough to be near clay-beds or close to communities of potters.

It is likely that certain communities of friars enjoyed a special reputation as makers of tiles, for we find in widely scattered districts, churches and cathedrals having exactly the

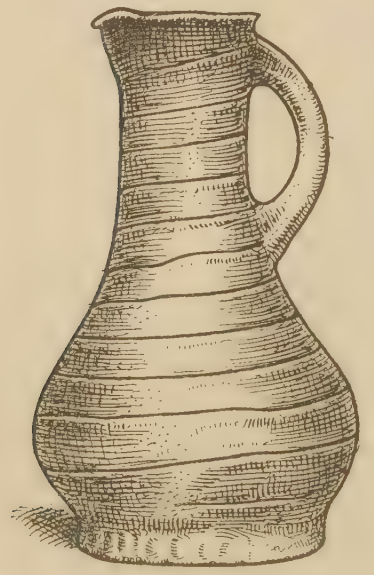
same type and pattern of tile-pavement, showing that either the communities who made tiles supplied them to those who did not, or that they lent skilled labour and materials. In Staffordshire only one tile-kiln of the Middle Ages has been discovered—at Great Saredon, near Cannock. This was not in the near vicinity of any great religious house, but it is within ten miles of Lichfield, and was probably under the control of the monks. Most of the larger priories would have their own kilns, and there is reason to believe that the priories of Newcastle, Trentham, and the abbey of Hulton employed tile-makers, if not ordinary potters.

The tiles were made by a simple process. A shallow wooden box or tray, equal in depth to the required thickness of the tile, was filled with clay and scraped level. The required pattern was impressed in the soft surface by a wooden die, or a tile already fired; the hollows were then filled with liquid clay of another colour poured from a spouted vessel. By absorption the liquid clay would sink in drying, and would have to be filled several times. When level, and sufficiently dry, the whole surface of the tile would be scraped smooth. The tile, in drying, would contract away from the sides of the wooden mould, and would be easily removed. The tiles were generally of red clay, with inlaid patterns in white clay. The unbaked tile was coated with powdered lead ore, which, after firing, produced a yellowish glaze, tinging the white portions with yellow, and imparting a rich reddish brown tone to the ground.

Of the potter's personality it is impossible to speak with confidence. The monkish potter was an artist, who used his clay as he used his vellum, as a material for the expression of his artistic ideas. The working potter, outside the monas-

THE ENCAUSTIC TILE-MAKER

teries, probably had a lower social status than that of the currier or the cooper, and was classed with the mere maker of bricks; which trade, indeed, he may have coupled with the manufacture of pots and pans. He would fill his yard or shed with a heap of utensils most in demand, and make a kilnful of pitchers, mugs, and flagons in readiness for the next "Church Ale," for which every wedded couple must pay their twopence, and every single swain his penny. One quarter of malt made into good ale was the usual measure—and one quarter of malt will make a good deal of ale. It is the festival of the patron saint, and the ale is drunk in the churchyard. We have seen something of the table manners of the aristocracy, and it is impossible to imagine that the lower orders would be more refined. Let us be charitable, and suppose that nothing more than a rough-and-tumble dance and a few noisy catches and roundelays have been indulged in. At any rate (unless the modern potter has deteriorated), we may be sure the potters were there, and insisted on having their "whack."

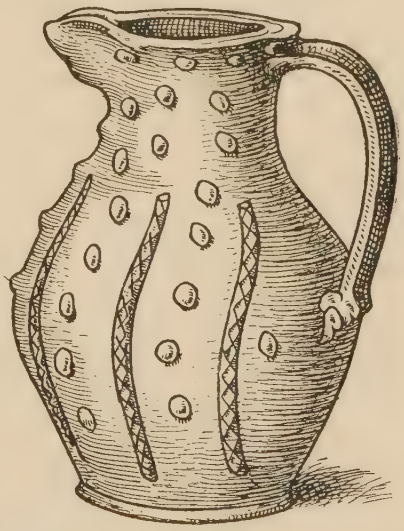


PITCHER WITH INCISED ORNAMENT, FOURTEENTH CENTURY. BRITISH MUSEUM

The Saint's Festival comes, however, only once a year, and such a meagre excuse for ale could not be tolerated. So there were "Clerk Ales," to enable the parish officers to collect their dues; "Christening Ales," given by the happy father and his friends; "Bride Ales," for weddings; and "Give Ales," the

proceeds of bequests made to keep the donor's memory fresh. Then the Church festivals (out of Lent) provided good reasons for drinking ale. Besides this were the fairs. Newcastle had a monthly fair, and has it still. Work here for the potters, in sooth! As Father Conway says: "Some abstemious souls have their home decoctions of broom, of bay berries, of ivy berries, their sloe wine and currant wine; but men, in good sooth, are believers in amber ale of malt, or of unmalted oats."

Four quarts could be had for a penny, so that in the intervals of free drinking, no potter need pause on the score of expense. But he must make his due number of pots, and when my lord's seneschal comes not to give orders, and mine host has less breakages, and the farmer is too busy or too penurious to order more milk-pans or butter-jars, and the swineherd (who is his own butcher) has done his salting, and wants no more brine-jars, our potter must load his mule or ass, and out and sell his pots. He has, we will say, no difficulty, for many lazy and careless queans will put up with inconvenience from broken or cracked utensils, knowing that the potter will call round presently. So, haggling here and bargaining there, he re-loads his mule, for he prefers "kind" to coin, getting better value, and goes home to look quietly about him before preparing another kilnful of ware, for men lived leisurely then.



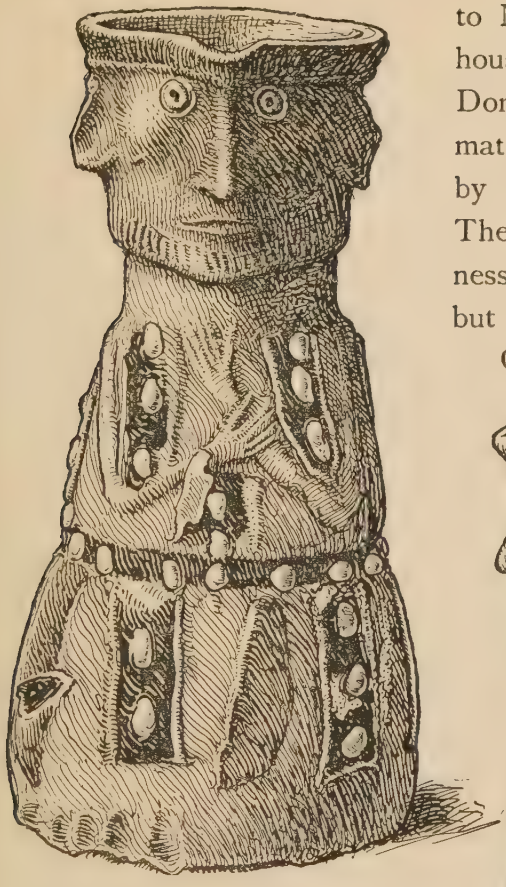
EARLY GREEN-GLAZED PITCHER. WILLETT COLLECTION

Our potter carries a knife in his girdle, for defence, and for use at meals (he wants no fork while he has fingers); he need not trouble about cleaning it after dinner while he can gather a handful of rushes from the floor to wipe it, and can sharpen it at will on the grindstone by his door. He sees stirring scenes, for the folk are hot-blooded and lawless. If a hind offends, he is pretty sure to be hanged without much enquiry or ado. If a husbandman breaks the law there is some show of trial. A yeoman might go pretty far if he enjoyed the favour of the lord of the manor. An esquire or armiger need stick at little if he had the good sense to go into retirement for a few months after the event, and sue for the King's pardon when the affair was blown over.

In the year 1408, on Trinity Sunday, Hugh de Erdswicke (ancestor of Erdswicke of Stone, who wrote the "History of Staffordshire" two hundred years later), with his brother Robert, gathered a thousand men-at-arms in Newcastle, with intent to slay John Blount *and others in the county*. They encamped openly by the town, with their "prickers" and "hoblers" armed in "coats of mail, briganders, palets or roundels, vanbrases, and rerebrases, and using horns and clarions." In this portentous and lively fashion they moved on to the borders of Derbyshire; but being prevented by the sheriff and posse of the county from doing hurt, they "disbandoned."

Hugh was summoned to take his trial at Lichfield, but (as was the way with these gentry) he ignored the summons, and "lay in retirement." After five years he surrendered, and received pardon of his felonies on December 12, 1414, by royal letters patent.

His "retirement" does not seem to have been particularly private, for in less than a year from his first achievement he came with Thomas de Swinnerton and a troop of armed men



to Newcastle and destroyed the house and shop of Sybil-le-Domp. An "inquest" on the matter was held ten days later by the Constable of the Castle. The mayor, Thomas de Thyknesse, was ordered to arrest them, but "had to desist from fear."

Our potter, in such case, if he held his cottage or clay-pit under such as Hugh de Erdswicke, would have to don armour or leather jerkin, take up pike, and do his master's bidding. If he was a freeman his life would not lack excitement, for even his recreations were not of the gentlest nature. John of

JUG, GREEN GLAZE, FOURTEENTH CENTURY.
FRONT AND SIDE

Gaunt, who lived at Newcastle, is responsible for the introduction of the "sport" known as "Bull-running." The event took place on feast-days, and at Tutbury, Gaunt's other Staffordshire castle, was held on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Tutbury was a great rendezvous for minstrels, who crowded there in such numbers that the Duke had to adopt special means to keep them in order. On the morning of the festival the minstrels attended matins at the priory. In the afternoon they met at the priory gate, when the Prior loosed a bull that had been deprived of its tail, ears, and horns. Its body was coated with soap, and the poor creature's nostrils filled with pepper. If the minstrels could catch and hold him long enough to obtain the smallest portion of his hair, the animal was theirs, provided the feat was accomplished before sunset and in the county of Staffordshire.

FOURTEENTH-CENTURY JUG. GUILDHALL MUSEUM

Afterwards bull-running was not confined to the minstrels, and such large numbers of people took part in this "sport" that tumults and bloodshed frequently resulted. Such scenes, enacted with the tolerance and even active participation of the clergy, throw a lurid light on the customs of "Merrie England"—hilarious enough and merry enough, perhaps; but with a merriment that was strongly tinged with brutality.

CHAPTER VII

THE TUDOR PERIOD

And whither went he? Ask himself,
Not me! To change of scene, I think.
Once sold the ware and pursed the pelf,
Chaffer was scarce his meat and drink,
Nor all his music—money-chink.

BROWNING.

FROM the period of the dissolution of the monasteries, the potters as a community emerge from the twilight which enveloped them, and leave clearer traces of their existence and proceedings. Their names begin to be known, their business transactions to be recorded, and the possibilities of identification of their productions more frequent. The potter occasionally attains some degree of social standing; he is sometimes appointed reeve, or constable of one of the various constablewicks.

For the present, his business is never organised on a large scale, but it is still an organisation, with the potter himself personally at the head—directing all operations—doing the most important work with his own hands, and giving effect to the novel ideas and quaint devices which he knows will obtain for him prominence over his contemporaries.

The closing of the monasteries was no doubt the cause of the potter being thrown upon his own resources, but whether or not this circumstance was the cause of his coming within

our range of view it would be difficult to say. It is, however, significant that the potters came into notice immediately after the monks were turned adrift.

The process of dissolution was undoubtedly harsh and arbitrary. The monks were rendered homeless. If they begged, they were liable to be branded and whipped. Many thousands were thrown on their own resources, and it is not impossible that besides those who were fortunate enough to make their way to foreign countries, there were many who threw off the cassock and followed some trade—perhaps potting among others. It is a curious fact that in nearly all accessible inventories of the properties of religious houses taken over by the King's receivers, no matter how wealthy the monastery was reputed to be, the effects were few and mean, being little more than fixtures. It is not unlikely that the decree of the King's Council, and its sanction by a time-serving Parliament, became known before the deeds of suppression were issued, and the priors and abbots found a safe haven for their more valuable possessions. In no inventory can we discover pottery or vessels of any kind other than candlesticks or censers and "holy water stockes," which were known of all men.

The inventory of the goods of the Newcastle priory, while it has a touch of pathos, is amusing; for it is so very obvious that the good monks had cleared away every bowl, beaker, and flagon, to say nothing of their more valuable goods. Among other similar properties were:

An old cope of cloth of bawaking.
Ten auld chesabulls.
Two auld tunicles and an old albe.
An auld surples.
Ane auld pawle off bawakyn.

A sowt of olde raggs and stols.
Two aulde chestes, one lockyed, tother brokyn.
Two poore outer clothes.
A steyned clothe with frontlet hangyng before the aulter.
A payre of organs.
Two bellys in the stepyll.

These effects (one would naturally suppose) would hardly represent the contents of the "halls, dormitories, kitchens, butteries, brew-house, and stables and outbuildings." The "bellys in the stepyll" and the "payre of organs" they would hardly dare to remove, any more than the "feyre tabull of alablaster on ye hye aulter," but we may be sure that all "portable property" was removed days before the arrival of Ingworth, the "King's Visitor." This may account for the very inconsiderable discoveries of pottery in the vicinity of the religious houses. In the case of the Cistercian abbeys, the pottery may have been buried in the hope of a speedy restoration of the rights of the Catholic clergy; a hope that was certainly strong among the Cistercians of Yorkshire, for we find that armed resistance and incitement to revolt were confined principally to the abbots and priors of this Order; and we have records of two Cistercian abbots who were committed to the Tower, and condemned to death for treason. The potter, then, freed from the influence (if not the absolute control) of the monks, was at liberty to make what pots he pleased, and sell them in such markets as he found convenient! The confiscation of the property and estates of the religious Orders had been so thoroughly accomplished that reorganisation and reconstruction were impossible in the brief reign of Mary.

In the time of Elizabeth other factors contributed to the establishment of "the Potteries" as a centre of the pottery industry. Previously, as we have pointed out, the potters were

scattered all over the county, and many were doubtless itinerant, like tinkers. But in Elizabeth's time there were two principal reasons which caused them to settle in groups in or near the hamlets between Tunstall and Longton: one was that these hamlets lay on or near the junction of highways leading from London to the north, and from Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester, to Chester and Liverpool; the other reason was the proximity of the coal-fields, now beginning to be systematically worked—we can hardly say mined, for only the surface seams were worked, or those which lay on the side of a steep declivity. Coal, as a fuel, was known to the ancient Britons before the Roman invasion, but the abundance of wood made the general working of the coal-seams unnecessary.* Still, as early as 1239 a charter was granted to the town of Newcastle-on-Tyne giving liberty to dig for coal, which was shipped on the banks of the Tyne and carried at least as far as London by sea, from which circumstance it came to be known as *sea-coal*, a term employed several times by Shakespeare. It was in Elizabeth's reign that coal first began to be used for smelting iron, a mineral abundant in Staffordshire, but up to this period only mined on the very

* It is a curious fact that up to the time of Elizabeth it was found impossible to smelt iron with coal. Charcoal was used, and the ore was taken from the mines to the forests or woods and there smelted. In Burntwood Forest, on the western borders of Staffordshire, is a dell within a clearing called the "Hell Hole" by the rustics in the vicinity. We were told of large quantities of slag which has lain in this dell beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitants or their fathers. We were curious to see it, and found, overgrown with ferns, vast heaps of partially smelted ore, containing a large percentage of iron. There is no iron in this neighbourhood, so that the iron must have been conveyed from other portions of the county to be smelted near the wood. On Cannock Chase are numerous remains of earth-ovens, of a much earlier period, where the iron was smelted in holes dug in the ground—the fires fed with logs, and the heat increased by bellows made of skins. It is a curious fact that the ironwork in the dome of St. Paul's is charcoal-smelted iron, prepared in or near the woods of Sussex.

LARGE MARBLED COSTREL, RED AND WHITE, HEIGHT 11½ INCHES

GREEN-GLAZED PUZZLE JUG, 1571, HEIGHT 11⅛ INCHES

Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

smallest scale. Coal, then, was well known to our Tudor potters, and from this time forward became their chief fuel.

Our information concerning the Tudor potter is gathered from the existing pots themselves, from documents dealing with sales, and schedules of household goods. The most important evidences of *locality* are the "sun-kilns," known to exist at least as far back as 1600: how long anterior to that period cannot now be ascertained, but there were two at Bagnall, others at Sneyd Green, Brownhills, Holden Lane, Golden Hill, Tunstall, Botteslow, Penkhull, Fenton, and Longton Lane, besides others in the towns (Burslem, Stoke, etc.). In Simeon Shaw's time (1828) several of these were still in operation: one in Hanley, another at Golden Hill, another at Meir Lane Furnace, and a very old one at New Oxford, near Chell. These kilns (Shaw says) were used for the manufacture of coarse wares such as the large red milk-pans, flower-pots, etc., evidently a survival of the coarser goods of earlier times.

The sun-kilns were not (as their name would seem to imply) used for the baking of wares, but for the preparation (or weathering) of native clays. The sun-kiln was a kind of vat, sunk in the earth, and about twenty feet square. It was lined with flags, and was about two feet deep, except in one corner, which contained a smaller and deeper vat. Into this smaller partition a quantity of clay was thrown, the vat being previously filled with water, and the whole mass agitated with a wooden instrument called a "blunger" (probably a corruption of "plunger"), resembling a very broad oar with a cross-shaped handle at the top, like the handle of a spade, but much larger, to allow the grip of both hands. The clay, after being "blunged" until it became an even, thick fluid, was spread over the bottom of the larger vat to the depth of three or four inches after being passed

through a sieve. It was then evaporated by solar action, and a second layer added, and the process repeated until the vat became filled. The clay was then cut into squares and stored in cellars, to be ready for use as required. These sun-kilns are important as establishing an approximate date for the manufacture of certain kinds of pottery, for, with the general use of coal, "slip" kilns, evaporated by flues heated with coal, came into general use.

It would seem strange that neither Speed, Camden, nor Erdswicke, in their surveys of the county of Staffordshire, throw any light on the doings of the potter. One reason, perhaps, is that the history of the county was to them the history of the county families, and the doings of a potter, would probably seem as much out of place in their records as the doings of a farrier or tanner. Still more curious is the complete absence of any mention of the calling of a potter in the registers of the period. The fact that potters were few, proves nothing, for among eighteen thousand entries of births, marriages, and deaths in the city of Delft for 1584, there is only one in which it is stated that the man's trade was a potter. This was Herman Pietersz, a man of considerable substance, and one of the original members of the Guild of St. Luke. The fact seems to be that Herman Pietersz could *afford* to call himself a potter, firstly, because he was wealthy enough to feel no shame in the pursuit of what was generally regarded as a humble calling; and secondly, because in Holland, as in England, the potter was awakening to the fact that the material was capable of treatment which could elevate the previously sordid trade into an art. There were attempts at this time to improve the forms of the various articles, and some were extremely successful. There is a stove-tile in the British Museum which has been illustrated very often, and

quoted as a fine specimen of English Pottery of the Tudor period. We prefer to believe that it was not made by English workmen, although bearing the English arms, the Tudor rose, and the initials (E.R.) of Queen Elizabeth. Notwithstanding the fact that it is made of native marl, and glazed with the usual copper-green glaze, it bears a close resemblance to the German and Flemish stove-tiles of the period, and was probably made by foreign workmen such as "Gaspar Andries and Guy Janson, who established at Norwich, in 1570, the manufacture of pottery after the fashion used in Flanders."

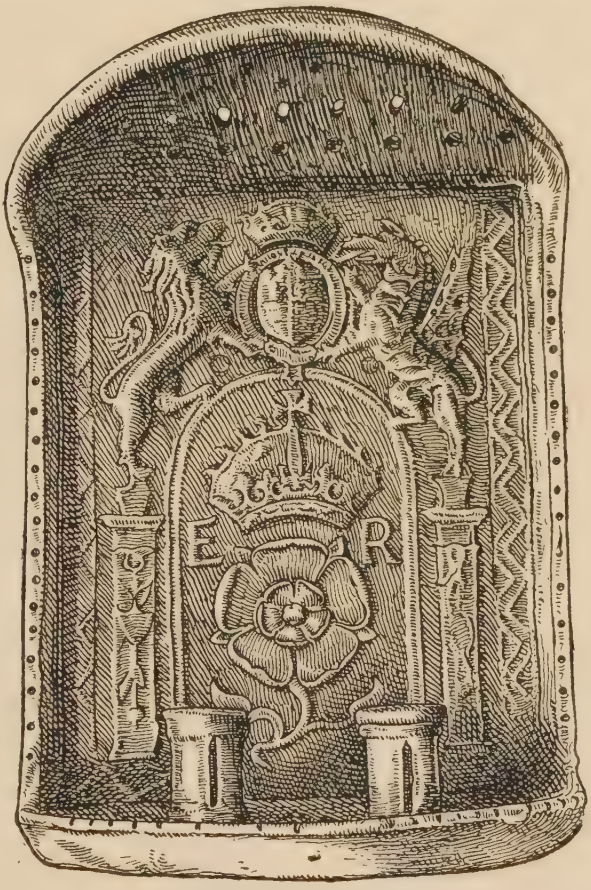
It is, to our mind, a fortunate circumstance that the isolated position of the Staffordshire potter kept him comparatively free from outside influences, and enabled him to develop his stronger, if somewhat ruder, individuality. Left to his own devices, he evolved a number of wares which owed nothing to foreign sources, either in constituent materials, or style and method of decoration. Among these are the slip wares, the agate, marbled, and combed wares, tortoise-shell, salt-glazed stone wares, the black basaltes, jasper, and white and cream-coloured earthenwares. All these are of Staffordshire origin, and display an originality of invention and an ingenuity of execution unequalled in the ceramic productions of any other European country. The rudimentary principles from which these decorations and classes of ware were evolved took definite shape during the Tudor period, and the seed was then sown which afterwards ripened to full fruition.

Attempts were made (often successfully) to imitate the Flemish stonewares and other Continental pottery, but these attempts were chiefly confined to southern potteries, or those near to seaport towns. The Fulham potteries made excellent stonewares, but always in the style of Continental models. It is known, too, that

occasionally Dutch, or Low German, potters came to England and worked in various parts of the country—in Yorkshire, Nottingham, Norfolk, and elsewhere; but North Staffordshire had, up to this period, made no reputation extending beyond the neighbouring counties, and possessed no town large enough to attract strangers. It is probable that very few examples of foreign ware found their way into the district, and that the few available were regarded more as objects of curiosity than examples for emulation. English "Bellarmines" or Greybeards—jugs with a bearded mask in front—were made in quantities, in imitation of their Flemish prototypes. Some of these are credited with a Staffordshire origin, but we are inclined to believe that no bellarmines of the ordinary type were made in Staffordshire.

If one of the jolly, rude old potters of Burslem had attempted the imitation of a Flemish bellarmine, he would have produced, indeed, a jug with a bearded mask in front, but how much ruder, how much coarser and more characteristic it would have been, we may judge from his known productions. We prefer to let the bellarmines go by default of evidence, and to claim for the Staffordshire man the rattles in the form of heads with ruffs, the children's toys, the money-boxes, chafing-dishes, costrels, and candlesticks. These are usually of a buff clay, covered, or partially covered, with a copper-green glaze. In the British Museum are a few examples of rather tall bottle-shaped vessels, marbled, the pioneers of the beautiful marbling that was done a few years later. There is also a very fine costrel with a stamped heraldic device of the time of Henry VIII., but unfortunately incomplete. Some pieces are in existence which are glazed with a blackish glaze, obtained from oxide of iron, and others are of a buff-coloured clay, glazed with lead. Of the

latter kind is a fine example in the British Museum. It is a kind of wall or bracket candlestick, with two nozzles set on a kind of tray at the base, and a perforated ornamental back with the letters E.R. The Staffordshire wares of the Elizabethan era are chiefly confined to the three kinds here described, the body being buff or orange red, and glazed with galena applied by itself, or stained with the oxides of iron or copper, although some odd mugs and drinking-vessels have been found, belonging to a period not later than 1500 and covered with a dark brown glaze formed by an admixture of oxide of iron with soda.*



CANDLE BRACKET, PALE BUFF WARE, LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. BRITISH MUSEUM

The Tudor potter, then, in North Staffordshire, had all the artistic virtues and vices of the savage.

* There may be significance in the fact that for a considerable period after the dissolution of the monasteries, the use of green glaze made from copper oxide fell into disuse. Is it possible that it was a secret of the monks?

The flood of the Renaissance brought to England treasures from the looms of Flanders, from the bottegas of Florence, and from the glass-furnaces of Venice, but they exercised no influence upon the potter. The Toccatas of Galluppi, the madrigals of Tallis, and the canzonettas of Palestrina sounded in the ears of Queen and courtiers, and in the halls of the nobles, but the potter danced his old traditional dances to the pipe and rebeck, and, incidentally, made quaint songs of his own.

JUG, GREEN-GLAZED BUFF WARE. TUDOR PERIOD. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

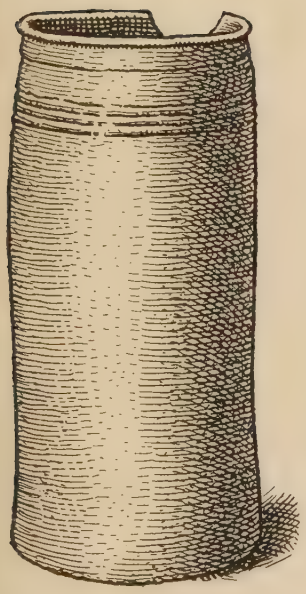
Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, and a host of others sang sweet songs, and made a great literature, but its echoes only reached the potter hundreds of years after his forerunners had made their pilgrimage to the great beyond. Nevertheless, there is something Shakesperian in the humour of the old Staffordshire crock-maker. Shakespeare's wit was sharpened and polished as befitted his surroundings, but his humour was the humour of the countryside, and is full of the shrewd wisdom and broad fun of the rustic. The Staffordshire man was a humorist too. He could not express it with the rhythmic grace of a Shakespeare, or, for the matter of that, with any grace at all, rhythmic or other, but he could, and did, put his jokes in and on his pots, leaving us a legacy of broad fun which sets him apart from all other practitioners of his craft, either in this country or elsewhere.

CHAPTER VIII

BUTTER-POT DAYS

Yet deeper lessons may we read
In this unacademic mead:
The wisdom of untutored sense,
Sagacity of reverence.

ALFRED AUSTIN.



BUTTER POT. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

AT the time of the Stuart accession to the throne of England, Staffordshire, and especially the Pottery district, begins to contribute its quota to the history of the nation. Four years before James I. was crowned the piratical publisher Jaggard, gathered from divers printed and other sources one or two genuine sonnets by Shakespeare, and various other pieces by different writers. These he issued under the title "The Passionate Pilgrime, by W. Shakespeare."

Thirteen years later, in 1612, Jaggard published another edition of "The Pilgrim," and introduced into it, again under Shakespeare's name, and to his disgust, two poems by Thomas Heywood, for which the latter publicly reproached Jaggard, who in the third edition retained the two poems, but cancelled the title page and substituted one without

any author's name. The piratical action of the publisher had, however, the effect of crediting the immortal Shakespeare during two and a half centuries with a sonnet and an ode written by a Staffordshire poet—Richard Barnfield. The great poet's treasury is stored with such a multitude of priceless gems that he can well

THREE-HANDLED TYG (YELLOW), INSCRIBED T.I. 1621
Height 6⅝ inches. Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher.

afford to spare Barnfield his own two little pearls. And pearls they truly are, for the memory of the immortal bard was never shamed by the public acceptance of the two pieces as his work. The ode, "As it fell upon a day," and the sonnet, "If music and sweet poetry agree," were published in 1597, in a volume of miscellaneous poems, in four divisions—the last, "Poems in

Divers Humours," being the one in which the poems appeared. Barnfield was intimate with Shakespeare, and the greater genius does not seem to have disdained to ask the advice of his more obscure, but still sweet, brother singer. Shakespeare, too, who had "little Latin, and less Greek," was fully appreciative of the acquaintance of a scholar like Barnfield, who took his bachelor's degree at Oxford at eighteen years of age. Shakespeare, indeed, appears to have flattered Barnfield in the way proverbially described as the most sincere, that of imitation. Barnfield's "Affectionate Shepheard" was published in 1594, nine years before "Hamlet" appeared. It is hardly possible to believe that the advice of Polonius to Laertes was not influenced by Barnfield's lines:

Sweare no vain oathes: hear much, but little say,
Speake ill of no man, tend thine owne affaires,
Bridle thy wrath, thine angrie moode delay;
(So shall thy minde be seldom cloyed with cares);
Be milde and gentle in thy speech to all,
Refuse no honest gain when it doth fall.

. . . .

Be not beguiled with words, prove not ungratefull,
Releeve thy neighbour in his greatest need,
Commit no action that to all is hatefull,
Their want with welth, the poore with plentie feed;
Twit no man in the teeth with what th' hast done,
Remember flesh is fraile, and hatred shunne.

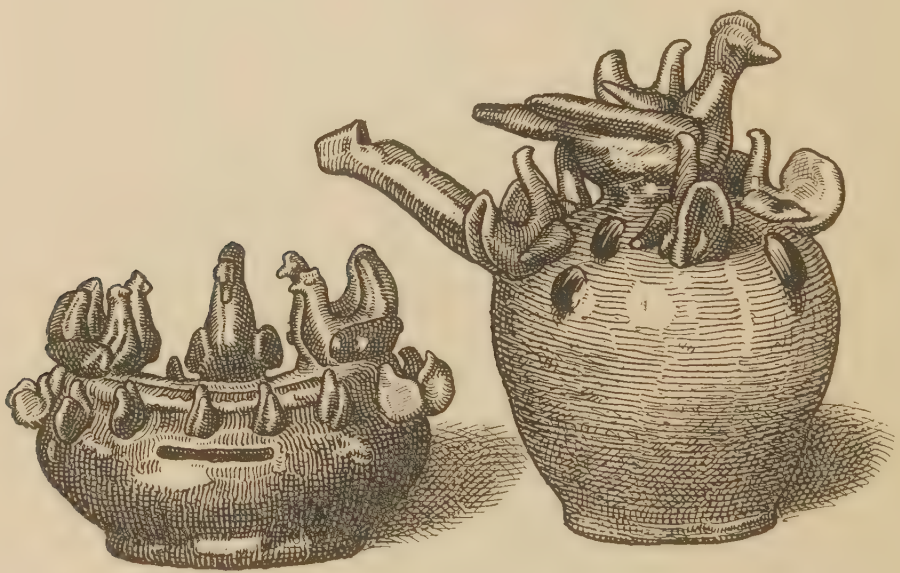
. . . .

Lie not; but let thy heart be true to God,
Thy mouth to it, thy actions to them both;
Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod.
The stormy working soul spits lies and froth.
Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lie;
A fault which needs it most grows two thereby.

Shakespeare improved every idea he worked upon, and it would be folly to deny that he improved this. But if this poem (together with the context, which is omitted on account of its

length) be compared with the advice of Polonius to his son it is curious how not only the idea is followed, but the cumulative method of expression. Barnfield succeeded to the Skrimsher estates at Darlaston, near Stone, where he lived until his death in 1627. He was buried in St. Michael's Church, Stone, and his burial is duly attested in the parish register.

At this time the potters were making drink-steins, jowls, jars,



MONEY-BOXES: BIRDS WITH YOUNG ONES, YELLOW GLAZE, BROWN SPOTS
Height 4 and 6 inches respectively. Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher.

and common butter-pots. Dr. Plott, who published his "History of Staffordshire" in 1686, describes the manufacture of butter-pots as the chief industry of the district, but inferentially this statement is repeatedly self-contradicted. He describes (Chap. III.) four different kinds of clay for making "their several sorts of pots," and explains in detail the "combing" or marbling process. "These also being dry," he says, "they then *Slip* or *paint* them with their several sorts of *slip*, according as they designe their

work, when the first *slip* is dry, laying on the others at their leisure, the *Orange Slip* making the ground, and the *white* and *red* the *paint*; which two colours they break with a wire *brush*, much after the manner they doe when they *marble* paper, and then cloud them with a *pensil* when they are pretty dry. After the *vessels* are painted, they *lead* them, with that sort of *Lead Ore* they call *Smithum*, which is the smallest *Ore* of all, beaten into dust, finely sifted and strewed upon them; which gives them the *gloss*, but not the colour; all the *colours* being chiefly given by the variety of slips, except the *Motley colour*, which is procured by blending the *Lead* with *Manganese*, by the *Workmen* call'd *Magnus*." Here we have definite evidence that not only the marbled clays, but the *mottled glazes* were in common use. How long these processes had been employed at the period of Plott's visit it is impossible to say. It is certain that they were not then new discoveries, but had, at any rate, been in operation from the beginning of the century.

Simeon Shaw goes so far as to say that "for more than a century prior to Dr. Plott's visit, at the two potteries at Red Street were made considerable quantities of all kinds of Vessels then used; and during the early part of the eighteenth century, the manufacturers there, named Elijah Mayer (who perished near Ulverston) and Moss, fabricated greater quantities of Pottery than any others of the whole district. A descendant of one family, subsequently in possession of one of these manufactories, much wished to impress the notion that these two had made more than all the others conjointly." All this, of course, must be taken *cum grano salis*; but, even after allowing a considerable margin for exaggeration and speculation, it serves to show that pottery of various sorts (besides butter-pots) was made in considerable quantities anterior to the Stuart régime.

Plott himself gives us particulars which suggest that many classes of ware were made in Burslem which we have either lost sight of or attributed to Continental origin. Among these are the large bottles, sold "chiefly to the poor *Crate men*, who carry them at their *backs* all over the *country*, to whom they reckon them by the *piece*, *i.e.* Quart, in *hollow ware*, so that six pottle, or three gallon *bottles* make a *dozen*, and so more or less to a dozen, as they are of greater or lesser *content*. The *flat wares* are also reckon'd by *pieces* and *dozens*, but not (as the *hollow*) according to their *content*, by their different *bredths*." It is plain that these "flat wares" were made in quantities, and sold for use, and not for ornamental or presentation purposes, as in the case of the "Toft" and similar dishes. The butter-pots certainly have a peculiar interest, if only for the light they throw upon the trading methods of the period. Plott speaks of an Act of Parliament made "about 14 or 16 years ago" (about 1654), "for regulating the abuses of this trade in the make of the pots, and false packing of the butter."

He continues: "To prevent these little country *Moorelandish* cheats (than whom no people whatever are esteemed more subtile) the factors keep a surveyor all the summer here, who if he have good ground to suspect any of the pots, tryes them with an instrument of iron made like a cheese taster, only much larger and longer, called an auger or butter boare, with which he makes proof (thrusting it in obliquely) to the bottom of the pot; so that they weigh none (which would be an endless business) or very seldom; nor do they bore it neither, where they know their customer to be constant fair dealer."

While these "little country Moorelandish cheats" were attempting to defraud their customers, greater events were shaping. The severe penal enactments in force against the

SLIP BOWL AND BUTTER-POT
Hanley Museum

FLOWER-HOLDER, YELLOW, WITH INCISED DECORATION AND DATE, 1633. HEIGHT 7 INCHES
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

Papists caused great uneasiness, and led to much secret plotting among the Staffordshire Catholics, then very numerous. In no part of England were the two extreme parties more bigoted and zealous, and no county supplied more recruits to the standard of revolt on either side. The hopes of the Papists were secretly strengthened by the knowledge that "Baby Charles" and "Steenie" had leanings towards Romanism. "Gunpowder Plot" had failed, Fawkes had been put to the rack and executed, the last of the conspirators had fled for asylum to Catholic houses in Staffordshire, and had made their last stand at Holbeach House. In 1619 a Staffordshire nobleman, Lord Aston of Tixall, was sent to Spain by the King to arrange a marriage between "Baby Charles" and the Infanta of Spain. His son, the second Lord Aston, fought well for Charles during the Civil War, and defended Lichfield during its nineteen weeks' siege. Oxford had surrendered, and Lichfield was the last place, with the exception of Ragland Castle, that held out for Charles. Presumably the yeomen were never strong Royalists in Staffordshire, and, even if they had been, their organisation was effectually broken up by Sir William Brereton four years before in the battle of Hopton Heath, near Stone, where the Royalist forces were dispersed, and their general, the Earl of Northampton, slain.

On the Parliamentary side we find Harrison (whose descendant, a hundred years later, became a partner of Josiah Wedgwood) fighting sturdily for Cromwell. Harrison was one of the signatories to the Army Manifesto, and probably did cavalry work at Preston, the last hope of Charles.

The Duke of Hamilton flies through Wigan, across Cheshire, and into Staffordshire, where he surrenders at Uttoxeter with the remainder of his followers, "very ill, and unable to march." The poor Duke lost his head on the scaffold, six months after the

execution of the King, whose death-warrant Harrison signed along with the other "regicides." The greatest regicide of all, Bradshaw, the "Lord Chief President," who sentenced the King, hailed from Newcastle, where he was Recorder. He lived, before he drifted away on the wide stream of politics, at a quiet country grange near Tunstall. Pepys tells us garrulously in 1661 (January 30) that he went "to my Lady Battens; where my wife and she are lately come back again from being abroad, and seeing of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw hanged and buried at Tyburne." He tells us, too, under a date four months earlier, that he "went to Charing Cross, to see Major-General Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered, which was done there, he looking as cheerful as any man could do in that condition. He was presently cut down, and his head and heart shown to the people, at which there was great shouts of joy. It is said, that he said he was sure to come shortly at the right hand of Christ to judge them that had now judged him; and that his wife do expect his coming again." Old people in Newcastle told of a tradition current in the town, that a fortnight after the execution, packhorses carrying two wooden cases were brought to Newcastle, and from these cases were taken five parcels thickly coated with tar, and bearing a gruesome resemblance to portions of a human body. These were said to have been buried secretly at dead of night in St. Giles's churchyard.

Seeing that the "miraculous preservation" of the second Charles in the thick foliage of the Boscobel Oak took place in Staffordshire, it is only natural that the potters should frequently attempt to immortalise the occurrence. Many quaint groups have been made, showing a figure which can only be identified as a king by an achievement on his head which is intended to represent a crown, the figure hidden in something which suggests

a cave, but which would need a label for the beholder adequately to realise not merely that it is an oak-tree, but any example of the vegetable kingdom. Claret pots were made in plenty, mostly with a rudely painted portrait of the King with crown and sceptre,

HANGING CANDLE-STAND, COATED WITH CREAM SLIP. WILLETT COLLECTION, BRITISH MUSEUM

duly initialled and dated. In the South Kensington Museum is a Restoration figure of slip ware, with an armorial device and the initials C.R. It is signed by Thomas Toft, and dated 1677, and is a most unusual example of this artist's work. "Restora-

tion" pots are comparatively scarce, but Marryat mentions one at Swansea, dated 1642; another at Strawberry Hill, 1646, and one belonging to Mr. Clements, at Shrewsbury, 1650. There is also one in the Norwich Museum dated 1648.

Pottery appears to be, at this period, coming into more general use at the feasts of the rich. We find on the one hand Pepys complaining of eating from wooden trenchers, and drinking out of earthen pitchers, at a Lord Mayor's feast; on the other hand Evelyn tells us (1652) that, "invited by Lady Gerrard, I went to London, where we had a great supper; all the vessels, which were innumerable, were of Porcelain, she having the most ample and richest collection of that curiositie in England."

Pepys again tells us of a visit to a "very old hospital or almshouse" at Saffron Walden, where they brought him "a draft of their drink in a brown bowl tipt with silver." Lord Braybrooke (in his notes to the University Press edition of Pepys) says the bowl is still to be seen at the almshouse. We gain a considerable insight into the manners of the aristocracy from Pepys' Diary. He tells us that he went to his coachmakers, "and there I do find a great many ladies sitting in the body of a coach that must be ended by to-morrow (they were my Lady Marquess of Winchester, Bellasses, and other great ladies), eating of bread and butter, and drinking ale."

The Lady Marquess of Winchester was daughter of William, Viscount Stafford.

After the death of Charles, and the accession of the second James, we hear more of Lord Aston, previously mentioned.

Mr. H. B. Irving, in his "Life of Judge Jeffreys," tells us that Dugdale, the "gentleman" of the Titus Oates crew, had been the steward of Lord Aston, and discharged from his post for various embezzlements—he had cheated Lord Aston's work-

men of their wages—hurried up to London with a sensational story of the machinations of the Staffordshire Catholics.

In the grounds of Tixall, the seat of the Astons, was an arbour in the corner of the bowling green, sheltered by an oak. Dugdale deposed that, standing behind this tree, he heard a treasonable conversation carried on between Lord Aston and Stafford. On this information Lord Aston was committed to the Tower, where Lord Stafford was already confined. Lord Stafford was executed, and Lord Aston was afterwards liberated. The tree has ever since been known as the "Stafford Oak." The remorse of Dugdale alone entitles him to particular distinction. As Mr. Irving says:—"He had none of the vulgarity of Oates and Bedloe, and executed his villainy with a refined and amiable subtlety that disarmed criticism. But, lacking the coarser fibre of his associates, he had not the good fortune to enjoy the brutal insensibility which guarded them so effectually against all the assaults of conscience. Dugdale died a pitable victim to remorse."

PUZZLE JUG, COATED WITH CREAM SLIP. WILLETT COLLECTION, BRITISH MUSEUM

With the flight of the second James, and the accession of the Prince of Orange, the political tremors which agitated even the secluded Potteries ceased, and the potters pursued the even

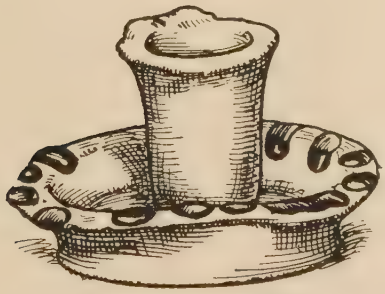
tenour of their way. Their comparative immunity from outside disturbance had been rudely shaken by the Civil Wars, and they never again quite regained it. They resented what they regarded as intrusion, as in the case of the Elerses, but, in a great degree, their senses became dulled by custom—they became accustomed to the advent of strangers, and even came to welcome them. Certain visitors, however, refused to be gainsaid; in 1666 the plague reached Staffordshire, and the "dead carts" were especially busy in Burslem and Newcastle, the two largest towns. In Burslem the dead were buried in trenches in the Grange field, and for many years (the tradition still lingers) the voice of "Singing Kate" was said to be heard at nightfall by the "Grange." It is not known who "Singing Kate" was, but the story tells that she was buried before the breath had left her body, among a heap of nameless dead.

In such a simple and superstitious community the belief in witches and warlocks is certain to abound. The Defender of the Faith was an authority on witchcraft, and the pronouncements of this latter-day Solomon would tend to intensify the belief in these evil old persons, which spread such disorder through the land that not a day passed but one witch at least was hanged, drowned, or roasted in some part of his most Christian majesty's dominions. The inhabitants of Windsor boiled a reputed witch on the King's birthday, and dutifully sent a bottle of the broth to his majesty. The King, rather alarmed than pleased at the present, piously passed it on to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Burslem had its witch—one Molly Leigh. Curiously enough, she died a natural death. Possibly resenting this, her spirit appeared openly and repeatedly in her cottage in the Hamil, where she was seen nursing her cat, after she was known to have been comfortably interred.

The story was certainly believed, for the good folk of Burslem became afraid to venture out after dark; indignation meetings were held, culminating in the determination to disinter the body, and, after the performance of certain ceremonies, to re-inter it crosswise, from north to south, instead of from east to west. This was accordingly done, the curates of Chell, Wolstanton, Burslem, and Tunstall attending the ceremony.

Molly was disinterred, and a black cat (or black bird) put in the coffin with her. The story goes that at this juncture a panic seized the people who officiated at this weird function, and all fled with the exception of the bold Burslem curate, who remained and completed his task.

So much for the story. The fact remains that to-day, in the old churchyard at Burslem, there is one stone laid crosswise, and it is inscribed Margaret Leigh, 16——.



SLIP-DECORATED CANDLESTICK.
BRITISH MUSEUM

TYGS, ETC., FOUND NEAR THE BRICK HOUSE WORKS, BURSLEM. TUNSTALL MUSEUM

CHAPTER IX

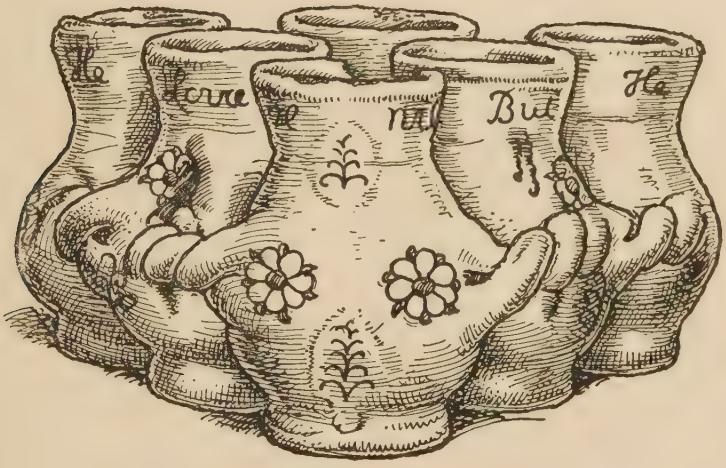
SLIP WARES AND "SHORD RUCKS"

THE "Defender of the Faith" fulminated his "counterblast" not without some reason, but to little purpose, however, for tobacco pipes were made in large quantities all over the kingdom.

In November, 1601, Mr. Secretary Cecil alludes in a speech to a patent of monopoly then enjoyed by tobacco-pipe makers, and in 1619 the craft of pipemakers was incorporated. Their privileges extended over the Kingdom of England and the Dominion of Wales. There were at least a dozen manufacturers in Bath, and Ben Jonson praised the pipes of Winchester. Perhaps the fame of the Broseley pipes had not at this period reached London, although the Broseley pipemakers were already busy and famous. There were several pipemakers at Derby and Lichfield, and Rigg of Newcastle-under-Lyme made a "gude cleane pipe and fayre," and his family continued the business for two hundred years. To-day briars and meerschaums, cigarettes and cigars are displacing the clay pipe, and the successors of Rigg, in this year of grace 1906, closed the pipe works at Newcastle and withdrew from the business.

But while King Jamie so fiercely attacked tobacco, it is at least

curious that he had nothing to say about the drinking habits of the time. Drinking vessels were made to display every device which the ingenuity of the potters could invent to raise a laugh among the topers in the taverns. There were the puzzle-jugs, perforated with holes or fretted patterns, which made it impossible for the drinker to take a draught without spilling the



FUDDLING CUP, BUFF WARE, INSCRIBED,
my frend is He That Love me will
But Ho He is I cannot tall. I.M. 1770.
BRITISH MUSEUM

liquor unless he understood the trick. A puzzle jug in Mr. A. E. Clarke's collection bears the following inscription :—

> Gentlemen now try your skill
> I'll hold you sixpence if you will
> That you don't drink unless you spill.

There were the "fuddling cups"—a group of cups or beakers cemented together, but with a hole drilled through each partition, and connecting all the cups, so that the drinker could not empty one without emptying all. Then there were the "tygs," having sometimes as many as ten handles, to be passed from

one guest to another—each person taking a different handle, and putting his lips to a different part of the rim. While many of these vessels were devised to entrap the unwary one into drinking more than he bargained for, others were schemed to regulate and restrain the practised toper. Some vessels had rows of little knots or pegs of clay stuck on at certain distances from the rim downwards, and no drinker, under a penalty, must drink below his peg. On the other hand, these vessels were sometimes used in friendly competitions, the competitor who could drink down to the lowest peg at a single draught or gulp, without taking breath, being adjudged victor, and being declared to have taken his rival "down a peg" (or two pegs, as the case might be).

In the Salisbury Museum is a fine four-handled tyg with a deep purple-brown glaze, made, however, not so much for a drinking competition as for the celebration of a birth. It is inscribed—

Here is the Gest of the Barley Korne
Glad Ham I the cild is born.
I. G.
1692.

This is a somewhat late specimen, but the practice of dating the pieces does not seem to have become common before about 1650. Besides convivial drinking, an occasional "comfortable cup" was indulged in at intervals, and the "nightcap" of mulled claret or sack, with spice, or the hot posset, with a roasted crab-apple, or a sprig of rosemary floating on the top, was customary in nearly every household. Good Queen Bess was known to enjoy her quart of ale at breakfast, and her sister and predecessor, Mary, of red-hot memory, liked her flask of canary. The Staffordshire potter made posset-pots in plenty. The

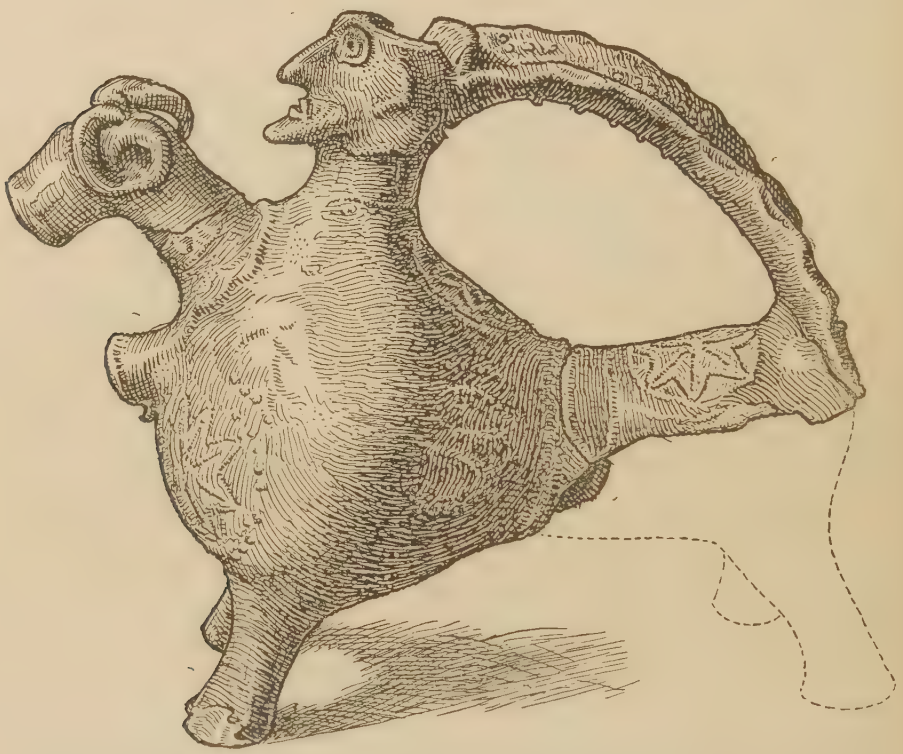
museums of Stoke, Hanley, and Burslem have numbers of fragments found in excavation all over the district. The discovery of an undated vessel in any particular locality is no evidence that it was manufactured in that locality; but the discovery of scores of cartloads of *débris* containing hundreds

POSSET-POT, EIGHT HANDLES, GREENISH GLAZE, WITH RAISED ORNAMENT AND INSCRIPTION I.W. MAY THE 27 DAY 1706. A B C D E F G H I L K. A K. BRITISH MUSEUM

of broken pitchers and imperfect vessels is almost conclusive proof of the immediate locality of a pottery, or number of potteries.

In the appendix to Wedgwood's catalogue (edition 1815) it is stated: "About forty years ago (1777) he (Wedgwood) caused a spot in the village to be opened to a considerable depth, and found the same appearances as will be exhibited in our present potteries a thousand years hence, if they should be uncovered,

—the foundations and other remains of ovens and workshops, with large masses of pitchers fused together by the effects of fire." It is unfortunate that none of these pitchers seem to have been preserved, for the occasional and superficial excavations

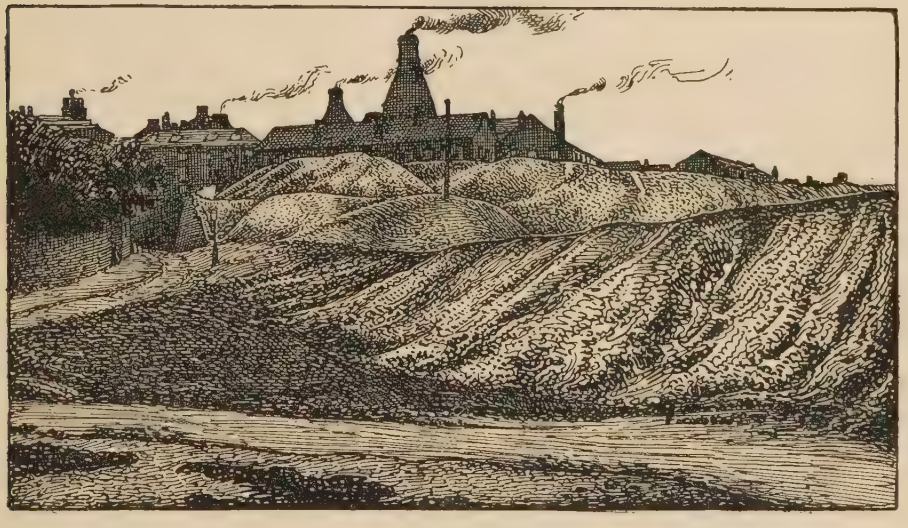


VESSEL OF GROTESQUE FORM, DECORATED WITH INCISED WORK AND SLIP, PROBABLY METROPOLITAN, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. GUILDHALL MUSEUM

which have been since made have certainly not revealed more than the merest tithe of what lies hidden under the surface.

In the potting district, where the surface of the ground undulates considerably, a constant change is taking place, and has probably taken place (in a lesser degree) from time immemorial. Whole valleys are levelled, disused clay and marl pits, from which millions of tons have been removed, filled up,

and levelled with the refuse from the potteries. When we consider that every oven, each time it is drawn, yields refuse amounting to from a fourth to a third (in bulk) of the amount of ware taken from it, it will be seen that the "shraff," as this refuse is called, creates a serious problem as to its disposal. The Hibernian gentleman who, having dug a well, and being discommoded by the earth he had displaced, decided to dig a hole and bury it, would scarcely find his position improved



"SHORD RUCKS"

by the digging of a fresh hole. But the Staffordshire potter really does to a great extent apply this solution to the question of his shraff. Speculative builders readily buy worked-out marl-pits, which would seem, at first glance, most unlikely sites for building. Under ordinary conditions the levelling of this ground would cost more than the value of the land itself, but the owner merely erects a notice board with the legend: "Shraff may be tipped here," and processions of carts immediately begin to arrive, to tip their contents into the chasm,

and if it is within an easy distance of a number of potteries, it is quickly filled up.

This shraff is an admirable material for the purpose. It is composed of broken saggers—a "sagger" is a coarse earthenware box in which the pottery is baked—of all the broken ware from the ovens and kilns, disused "setters," props, stilts, spurs, and thimbles, and the cinders drawn from the oven "mouths." It is firm, light and porous, and a crust of shraff two or three yards deep spread over swampy or marshy ground prevents dampness by acting as a system of drainage. Whole districts in the Potteries are built on beds of this material, and new roads are almost invariably laid with it before the final dressing of macadam or concrete. The cinders are often only partly consumed. The fires in kilns and ovens are raked out as soon as the desired heat is attained, whether the combustion of the fuel is complete or not. Consequently on these shraff heaps, or "shord rucks" as they are locally called, many of the poorer class of women may be seen collecting these cinders for fuel.

Sometimes the cinders are raked out of the kilns red hot, thrown on the general heap in the pottery yard, and carted away immediately. Many times the fire has smouldered, and broken out months afterwards in the ground. A well-known Longton manufacturer built a row of houses within the last few years on land "levelled up" with shraff. The houses were finished and tenanted. Quite six months afterwards, the ground was found to be on fire. The loose mixture of broken pottery and combustible cinders doubtless formed a system of underground flues, and some smouldering cinders originally thrown down had possibly slowly burned until large areas were attacked. The fire brigade threw great quantities of water in the ground,

JUG, INSCRIBED SAMUEL HUGHESON, 1678, HEIGHT $7\frac{3}{4}$ INCHES, AND COVERED POSSET-POT, HEIGHT $9\frac{3}{4}$ INCHES
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

THREE SLIP PORRINGERS

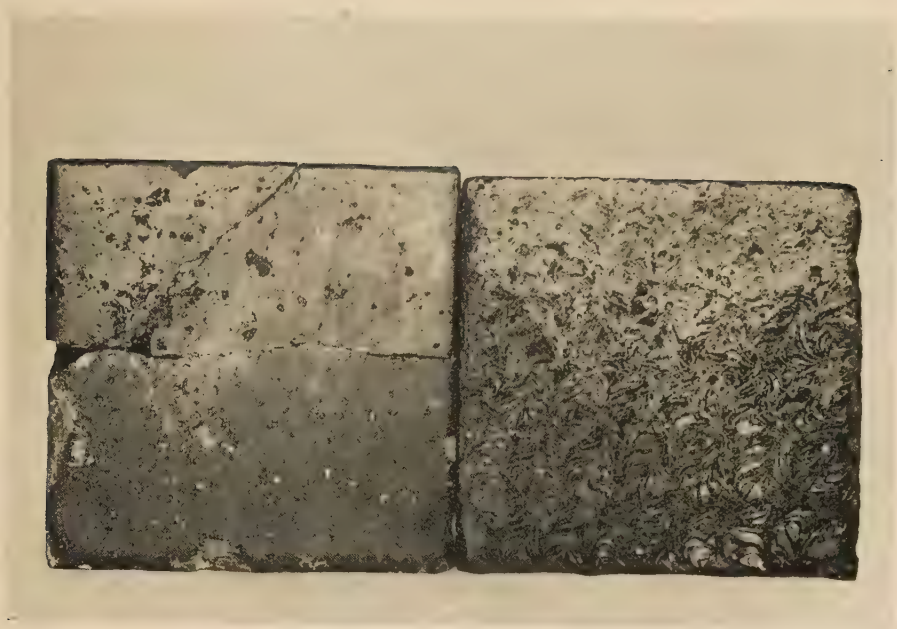
which rapidly absorbed it, but to no purpose. It is likely that the arrangement of broken pitchers which made for the formation of rough flues also formed a system of rude tiling, under which the fire burned untouched by the streams of water. Eventually deep trenches were dug, and jets of water thrown horizontally, until at last it was completely extinguished. This, we believe, is an isolated case; but there are numbers of instances of smouldering fires in the large mounds of shraff scattered over the Pottery District.

The ground, therefore, will always furnish a record of the potter's art wherever there are communities of potters. Nearly all the pottery found in excavations in the towns and villages consists of "wasters," or broken pieces, and imperfect pieces considered unfit for sale. The museums, as we have previously indicated, possess abundance of them, and many private persons have numbers of specimens. We know an instance of a gentleman who, upon seeing a number of broken pieces unearthed, asked to be allowed to take a broken porringer—to the intense surprise of the workmen, who considered them of no value, and who jocosely offered to pick out the best pieces and "bring 'em in a 'barrer' for the price of a quart." These pieces have indeed (with rare exceptions) no great value, but they help us to approximate the period when slip decoration came into general use. They are of the coarsest type of manufacture and decoration. Made mostly of red marl, they have rude arrangements of spots and stripes in a whitish slip which appears yellow under the leaden glaze stained with iron oxide. Others are decorated by "combing," a method which was afterwards carried to a very high pitch of perfection. We give examples of two porringers and a drinking cup. The porringers were found during excavations at Miles

Bank, Hanley (illustration, p. 102). The first is of buff clay, covered on the outside with a wash of brown clay, and decorated in buff slip with a peculiar pattern. The second is combed inside in a rather unusual fashion, the streaks being so wide apart that the idea of combing might not, at first glance, be entertained; but an examination of the bottom of the cup suggests that this method of decoration may have been adopted.* "Combing," we may say *en passant*, is done by splashing or dabbing slip of a different colour on the object to be decorated, and then dragging a flexible toothed instrument over the surface while the slip is still wet, after the manner of a house painter imitating oak or other woods by the process known as "graining." The cup illustrated in this group is an interesting specimen. It has a band at the top with the motto, "No Pope." It is combed on the bottom part, and is little more than the size of an ordinary teacup.

Another interesting example is the small dish, photographed with the "butter-pot" (p. 88). The decoration of this is extremely elementary and rude, and in our opinion denotes an early application of the process of slip decoration. The coarse quality of this and many other fragments has no real bearing on the point of age, being merely a question of the skill of the operator. There is, however, one point which seems to have escaped notice—really important in its way—*i.e.* that these early fragments are invariably "*painted*," or done with the brush, instead of the "quill," or perhaps supplemented with that instrument. The slip decorations of Toft's time were chiefly done with the "quill." The accompanying illustration of this instrument will

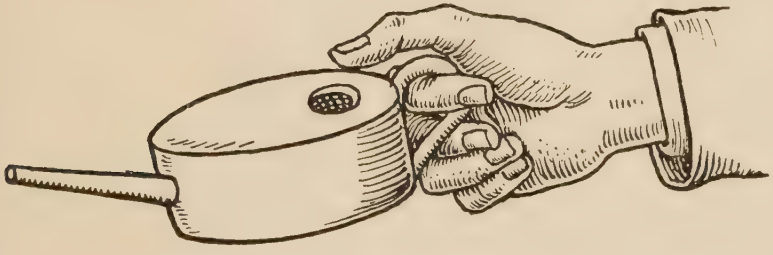
* Mr. Jahn is certain that this piece is not "combed," but striped with the pencil; the "combed" effect at the bottom of the cup being due to the running of the glaze.



"COMBED" TILES
Hanley Museum

make its use clear. It varies in shape, and is sometimes like a small teapot.

The slip was poured from a little can of metal or pottery through a removable spout or quill, the thickness of which determined the strength of line or size of spot required. At the end of the vessel near the handle was a round hole, and the flow of slip was checked when required by the simple expedient of stopping the hole with the thumb. The trellis-work with which both the Tofts usually decorated the borders of their plates, the thick lines and spots together with the



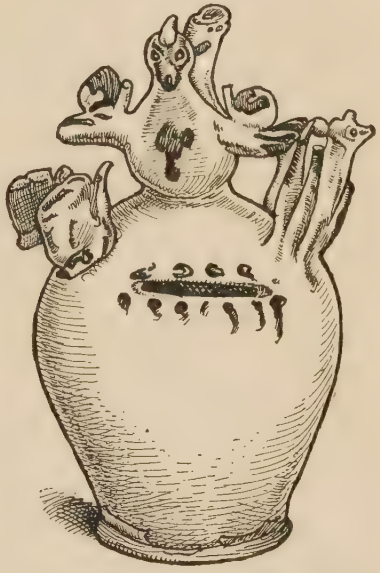
lettering and date, were all done with this instrument. Its general use may be said to denote a period in slip decoration. Of course, painted or pencilled slip wares were done after as well as before the employment of the "quills"; but we believe that many of the rude pencilled specimens are of much earlier date than is usually attributed to them. The fragments found in Hulton Abbey strongly support this view. Many of these are identical in character with many fragments found in excavations in other parts of the district. And it must be remembered that the abbey was dismantled in the reign of the eighth Henry. A further and more convincing piece of evidence is shown in the case of four tiles found in the abbey, and now in the Hanley Museum (illustration, p. 56). The period of

manufacture is probably about the thirteenth century, and they are unusually interesting, as exhibiting three distinct methods of decoration. The two upper ones are red clay, embossed coarsely with armorial bearings. They are evidently made from a wooden or pitcher mould, and are roughly glazed by the application of powdered lead ore. The tile in the left-hand bottom corner is what is called an "encaustic" tile, with white clay inlaid on a dark brown ground. But the right-hand bottom tile is frank slip decoration, and strongly resembles in style, colour, and material many of the fragments found in the same place and elsewhere.

We give an illustration (p. 104) of two combed tiles which we believe to be unique. These also are from the Hanley Museum, and, of course, of a much later period—probably about 1700. They are two of a set which appear to have been made for the decoration of a fireplace, very possibly for the house of a potter who was in the habit of applying this form of decoration to ordinary wares. It is very likely that they were not made for sale as an ordinary article of commerce, for we are not aware of the existence of any other examples; but at the same time it is certain that they were not an isolated experiment, seeing that the Museum possesses a number of them.

These, and many other scattered pieces—the flotsam and jetsam of the pick and shovel—give us a faint inkling of what might be found in Staffordshire if we only dug sufficiently deep. There is digging enough, in truth, going forward, if we look at the yawning pits which we find in any part of the Potteries; but these diggers are digging for marl, knowing where to dig, and carefully avoiding potsherds. The old shards are being buried deeper and deeper—they will not be uncovered in our day. The shraff has been employed methodically for hundreds of

years to level the ground, and neither private individuals nor corporate bodies will disturb the surface. Digging is costly: filling up is comparatively economical, and goes on automatically. The sketch of Toft's Works at Tinkersclough affords an excellent example. The old cottages in the foreground were once on a level, and are now in a pretty deep hollow. The bank on the left is composed exclusively of refuse from potteries, and, doubtless, underneath the strata of successive decades, are innumerable fragments of Toft ware, thrown there for convenience when his ovens were drawn. Many of these old cottages are dilapidated, and, if not already condemned by the Council, are certain to be condemned sooner or later. When they are pulled down the hollow will not be filled (as it would be in most other localities) by shovelling off the crust of the neighbouring hillocks, but by simply diverting part of the always abundant supply of fresh shraff and tipping it in the hollow until the hollow is no more; so that month by month, and year by year, the chances of fresh discoveries by excavation become more remote.



SLIP-DECORATED MONEY-BOX, YELLOW GLAZE. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

THOMAS TOFT IN HIS WORKSHOP

CHAPTER X

THE TWO TOFTS

"Bah! you [English] are the reverse of your Mrs. Joanna Southcott. She mistook a dropsy for the divine afflatus; you mistake the divine afflatus for the dropsy."

HENRI DE LANGE.

IT matters little whether foreign potters landing in Kent introduced the typical slip decorations at Wrotham, or whether the Wrotham potters evolved the style of their wares from their own inner consciousness; the fact remains that the Wrotham, Tickenhall, and Staffordshire potters are peculiarly and aggressively English, and made wares like no foreign ware of any country or period. There is a similarity between the Wrotham and the Staffordshire tygs and posset-pots in the style of ornamentation, and they are exactly alike as regards the material and its treatment. Generally, the Wrotham wares show greater care in the workmanship, especially in the handles of tygs and similar vessels, and exhibit more variety in the decoration. Broadly speaking, these slip wares were decorated in three ways. In one, the ornament is moulded, lines being incised in the mould, to form the required pattern. In the ware, of course, these lines are raised, and coloured slips are poured in the partitions, the raised lines forming a kind of wall which prevents the different colours from running together. The Tickenhall dishes are nearly all made in this way.

The second method is that employed by Toft and his

"school." The large masses of slip are applied with a brush and the outlines and details done with the quill, as already described.

The third method, frequently employed at Wrotham, consists of the use of medallions and other moulded ornaments made in separate moulds, and afterwards fixed on the object to be decorated.

These processes were sometimes combined with inlaid work, or "combing," and the outline was frequently broken or varied by pressure with a notched stick or some cogged instrument. The Wrotham wares bear the earliest traceable dates on pieces of positive identification, one, a jug in the Maidstone Museum, bearing the date 1656. But the earliest known dated piece, of undecided origin, bears the date 1612. We need not concern ourselves too particularly in inquiring into the extent of the debt of Tickenhall or Cockpit Hill to Staffordshire, or of Staffordshire to Wrotham, if indeed, Wrotham was the first to do this particular kind of ware, which we doubt; we are, however, convinced that some of the Staffordshire workmen were migratory, and carried their craft intermittently into both Derbyshire and Wales.

In the British Museum is a panel of four tiles of the fifteenth century from Thornbury Castle, Gloucestershire, with a fine armorial device—the shield of arms and supporters of Henry VI. enclosed by the Garter, and four badges in the corners—the Staffordshire knot, the flaming hub of the Buckinghams, the chained swan of the Bohuns between two Tudor roses, and a treasurer's bag. It would, as a matter of course, be absurd to infer from the presence of the Staffordshire knot that the tiles were either executed in Staffordshire or by Staffordshire workmen. The castle was left unfinished by the last Duke

of Buckingham, of the house of Stafford, when he was arrested under Henry VIII. The badge appears here as of the house of Stafford, and not as a county badge, the knot being adopted by the county by common usage. Moreover, the character of

SLIP DISH. PELICAN IN HER PIETY, THOMAS TOFT. BRITISH MUSEUM

the work of these tiles is greatly in advance of anything produced in Staffordshire at that period. It is, however, somewhat unfortunate that the English slip wares do not exhibit some mark of identification, in addition to name and date. We should, then, not be surprised if the hand of the Staffordshire

man was often found upon wares which are sometimes compared, to his disadvantage, with his known productions. It may be suggested that the reverse might be the case. But let it be remembered that the Wrotham, Metropolitan, Derbyshire and Glamorganshire potteries were isolated concerns, while Staffordshire was a community, and at this period beginning to be a large community, of potters.

Matthew Arnold, in his "Essays in Criticism," suggests that "to our English race an inadequate sense for perfection of work is a real danger, if the discipline of respect for a high and flawless excellence is peculiarly needed by us." He is, of course, referring especially to poetry, but by implication includes all the arts. The ubiquitous "if" robs the suggestion of much of its sting, making it largely conjectural. We deny the conjecture. At the time Arnold wrote, the trend (now more emphatic) was rather in the direction of polished workmanship than of original conception—the manner was placed before the matter. To-day, in literature, the arts, and the drama, the method of expression takes precedence; the thing expressed coming in a bad second. In English pottery, when the mere execution was almost flawless, the scheme of design, if not descending to absolute banality, at any rate lost its vitality, and became merely imitative, or at best, adaptive. The slip wares of the "Toft period," including Wrotham and Tickenhall (which latter may be ranked as contemporaneous with Toft), were eclipsed in public favour by "Staffordshire Delft" and other imitative wares, and a great artistic opportunity, it seems to us, was lost. We applaud these brave and merry old potters, who had something to say, and said it with strength and directness. Absolutely without knowledge of chemistry, cultivating no æsthetic theories, ignorant of any rules

SLIP DISH. "THOMAS TOFT"
South Kensington Museum

TWO-HANDLED POSSET-POT
South Kensington Museum

of design, and quite unable to draw, in the modern sense of the term, they nevertheless produced work which (at its best) is admirably spaced and disposed, with the patches of dark and light colour placed with the greatest judgment, and with a colour effect which, although limited in its range, is perfect in its way. It may be said that the natural marls of different tints harmonise of themselves, and that they *couldn't* go wrong. The reply is simply that subsequent potters have used these clays, and *have* gone wrong.

There is in all early work, of whatever sort—painting, sculpture, architecture, music, or in the different handicrafts—a certain directness of aim, a simplicity of utterance and expression, which is either not to be found, or is obscured, in the work of any subsequent period; a freedom from vice—from vices of handling, technique, and so forth—and we experience from this the same pleasure that we do in meeting with a pretty and delightful child.

Add to this the deep interest we feel in all fresh effort, however tentative and incipient. The story of Robinson Crusoe fascinates us because he starts practically upon a clean slate, and must make his own pencils. Imagine him better equipped: with perhaps a bale or two of clothes of the newest cut, a case of Birmingham hardware, a crate of crockery from Longton, boots from Leicester, half a dozen chairs from Tottenham Court Road, and a chest of brand-new Sheffield tools; his task would have been easier, and he, no doubt, would have been correspondingly thankful. But to us what a loss of charm! His cabin would become commonplace, and he could not appear in a cutaway coat beside a prickly cactus without vulgarising the landscape. Your pioneer and discoverer, therefore, your beater-out of a new path, whilst he must necessarily meet with

many obstructions and difficulties, possesses in some ways an advantage over any of his successors: he is not hampered by precedent, he can choose his route, and his accomplishment, whatever the value of it may be, has a certain freshness which is inseparable from the conditions of its production.

This freshness is present in all the slip work of the Toft period. It is full of mannerisms—Toft's own work especially. We know well the faces, which are all alike, the eyes and nose like a pair of scissors, often done with one continuous line; we know the curious hands and feet, and the favourite *motif* between the border and the principal subject, shaped something like a string of sausages. But how many a cultured designer of to-day would fail to accomplish an equal result by the use of "superior" decorative "properties." Take a case or cabinet of almost any modern pottery and place beside it any fine piece of Toft's work; how its distribution of tones and masses and its comfortable and satisfying colour make everything else look either "washed out" or forced!

Although Toft's personages have all the same face (an extremely quaint face, however), they are generally recognisable as the persons for whom they are intended. It may be by means of the wig, the lace, the crown, the trunk hose, or all in combination—no matter, the *tout ensemble* amusingly suggests the subject. His mermaid in the South Kensington Museum has the same face as King Charles' and Queen Anne's, and a most extraordinary tail. To quote the famous "bull," she "has plenty av backbone, an' knows how to bring ut to the front," for there is a distinct vertebral articulation from the neck to the centre of the torso. But she is a mermaid all the same, and, more than that, a good piece of decoration. Toft's figures are not imitations, but abstractions; not copies, but

TINKERSCLOUGH AT THE PRESENT DAY

symbols, in the sense that heraldic achievements are symbols, rather than portraits of the objects they symbolise. Few people would venture to commend the veracious qualities of ordinary heraldic representation, or to criticise their absence, and few would deny their decorative value.

Toft worked at Tinkersclough, which is now a group of a few hundred houses and a couple of potteries. It was formerly a lane, or "clough," about midway between Shelton, Hanley, and Wedgwood's Etruria, and doubtless a convenient resting-place for travelling gipsies and tinkers; hence, probably, its name. It is not positively known whether Toft—Thomas Toft; there were two prominent Tofts, Thomas and Ralph—had a factory of his own, or whether he executed orders for his dishes for other potters. We incline to the opinion that he had a small pottery, and that it is still standing at the corner where the road from Hanley to Etruria Vale crosses the main street of Tinkersclough, once the "clough" itself. We are well acquainted with this locality, our family for four generations having owned (and still owning) a row of cottages adjoining the pottery we believe to have been occupied by Toft. Forty years ago we remember well the quaint walls around the cottage gardens built of disused saggers, made more solid by being filled with "shraff." All the walls and many out-buildings at Tinkersclough were then built of saggers, and one or two are still standing. We give an illustration on page v. in which these "sagger" out-buildings appear. We well remember, as children, how it was our amusement, in common with other children, when a piece happened to be broken out of the side of one of these crockery wall-boxes, to poke out the refuse with a stick, and gather the "props," "bits," and rings, which latter were thick and small, no bigger than a penny piece, made of red or orange-coloured clay, and

glazed thickly with a treacle-coloured glaze. The saggers, too, were splashed and clotted with the same glaze, and we have no doubt whatever that the sagger walls, rings, and pottery were directly connected with Thomas Toft and his work. Fortunately there are many signed examples of both the Tofts in existence. One dish is mentioned by Mr. Solon as having been seen in a cottage in Hanley, inscribed in front with the maker's name in slip, and scratched on the back the inscription :

THOMAS TOFT
TINKERSCLOUGH
I made it 166 (the other figure illegible).

In the Willett Collection is a large yellow dish with a bird in dull red slip; this is signed "Ralph Toft," and bears the date 1676.

Toft is chiefly known by his dishes, which is no doubt attributable to his custom of signing them ; but it is probable that many unsigned pieces were done by both the Tofts.

In the York Museum is a brown glazed six-handled tyg of very unusual type for either of the Tofts. It is decorated in yellow and black slip with the head of Charles II. and the letters C R alternated with pomegranates between the handles. It is inscribed :

THOMAS TOFT
ELISABETH POOT

The South Kensington Museum has several examples of dishes by both Thomas and Ralph Toft. The mermaid dish we have already mentioned, and there is a fine dish by Thomas of heraldic character, semi-barbaric, but powerful in treatment. It is a representation of the lion and unicorn rampant, in brown and orange slip with the usual yellow glaze. It bears the initials T. L., and is signed Thomas Toft. The fine

SLIP DISH. "RALPH TOFT, 1677"
British Museum

LARGE FOUR-HANDLED TYG, HEIGHT 10½ INCHES
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

"lion passant" also in this collection is illustrated on page 112. The British Museum, also, has several dishes with representations of royal personages by the two Tofts, together with the well-known "Pelican in her piety," by Thomas Toft, produced about 1660. The bird is extremely unlike a pelican, considered in detail, but the whole subject cannot be mistaken for anything but what the author intended, and, like all his dishes, has a fine decorative quality.

The fine dishes representing an eagle, and a grotesque figure of a man brandishing a sword in each hand, and dated respectively 1676 and 1677, are by Ralph Toft.

There are many of these dishes in private collections. Mr. F. Bodenham has one with a booted and spurred figure in brown slip, with raised arms holding a flower in each hand. It has the usual yellow glaze and trellis border, and is inscribed with the initials R. W. placed on either side of the head. It is signed Thomas Toft, and is an exceedingly interesting specimen.

In the collection of Mr. J. E. Hodgkin, F.S.A., is a large dish with portraits of Catherine of Braganza and Charles II. The treatment of the hair, the faces, and the lace collars is delightfully naïve, and the general effect is extremely decorative. This dish is by Thomas Toft. Ralph Toft is responsible for a large circular dish in the collection of General Pitt-Rivers. It is decorated in black, white, and orange slip, with a figure of a lady holding a flower in her left hand. The costume is rude and quaint in the extreme, but is amusingly correct. In Mr. Solon's splendid collection of slip wares is an extremely fine example of Ralph Toft. It is decorated in light and dark brown slip with a female figure, and two crowned heads in ovals with foliage. In this dish the usual trelliswork is replaced by a very telling and effective border of conventional

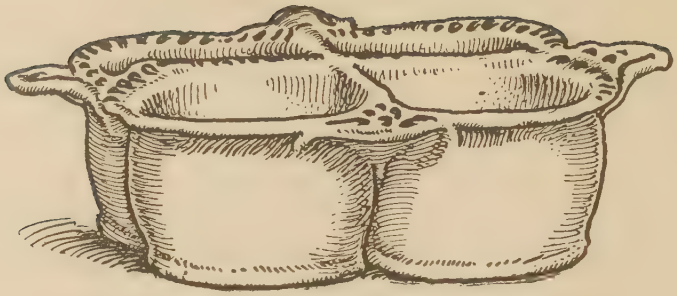
ornament. The Dublin Museum has a most interesting Thomas Toft dish. It is decorated with the figure of a man holding a staff, executed in brown slip. The background is ornamented with fleurs-de-lis and other conventional flowers. It is glazed with the usual yellow glaze, and is inscribed with the maker's name, "Thomas Toft," and

THE
DUKE OF
YORK.

The foregoing will convey a good general idea of the known work of the two Tofts. It is likely that they were father and son, but on this point no positive evidence exists. Thomas seems to have begun the making of his decorative wares about 1660, and Ralph cannot be traced until some sixteen years later. The "school" which they undoubtedly founded, and which is quite distinct from Wrotham, Tickenhall, or Cockpit Hill, we shall deal with in a subsequent chapter. Scant justice has been done to these truly characteristic and original wares, although the thanks of the community are due to Mr. Solon and others for calling attention to their merits. They contained the germ of a great national type of ceramics, which has remained in a state of arrested development. The inevitable technical and artistic improvement was diverted to other types, sometimes less virile, and always less national. But it was the fate of these other types to be superseded in turn, and generally by imitations of foreign wares which attracted by their technical excellence, generally effective, but sometimes of a superficial and even meretricious character. The purely British characteristics died hard, even when new methods and processes were employed; they were used in the production

of wares bearing some reference to national, local, or personal events, and as a vehicle for satire and caricature. It is at least curious (but perhaps typical of the Saxon temperament) that the executive triumphs of the British potter have almost invariably been connected with the imitation of classic or Oriental models. A prominent American merchant and connoisseur of pottery once said to one of the present writers, "Why do you English potters persist in the imitation of French, Japanese, and other wares? You haven't the dainty touch of the French, you lose the character of the Japanese. Artistically it is suicidal, and as a mere matter of trade it is foolish, for no sensible person will buy imitations when they can get the original at the same price or less. Neither the French nor the Japanese can imitate pottery of purely English character. They have both tried, and, unlike you, are each smart enough to recognise their inability."

This is altogether true, and embodies a valuable principle. The English potter did not know, and does not even now know the opportunities and possibilities of his own old slip wares, his stone wares, his black basaltes, his agate and marbled wares, and even (entirely apart from the classic convention) his jasper wares. As Henri de Lange says, he mistakes the divine afflatus for a dropsy.



SLIP CRUET-STAND, BUFF WARE. BRITISH MUSEUM

CHAPTER XI

THE TOFT SCHOOL

The rough work is at all events real, honest, and, generally, though not always, useful: while the fine work is, a great deal of it, foolish and false as well as fine, and therefore dishonourable; but when both kinds are equally well and worthily done, the head's is the noble work, and the hand's the ignoble.

RUSKIN, "Crown of Wild Olive."

IT is quite impossible to say how many followers or would-be rivals the Tofts had. Every Staffordshire potter of their period, and thirty years following, who made slip wares, would come under one or other of the above descriptions, according to their capacity. Although we cannot doubt that it was the general practice for makers of slip wares of the festive, presentation, or souvenir types to sign their wares, yet the practice was very often neglected, and many fine tygs and dishes have no marks or inscriptions by which their makers can be traced.

Moreover, it is often difficult to determine with any degree of confidence whether the names inscribed on many pieces denote the maker, or the recipient. Some are plainly enough the names of the persons for whom the vessels were made, and not those of the potters. Others, again, are inscribed with what are palpably the names of both maker and recipient, as in the case of the fine

tyg in the York Museum marked "Thomas Toft" and "Elisabeth Poot," together with other examples by different makers.

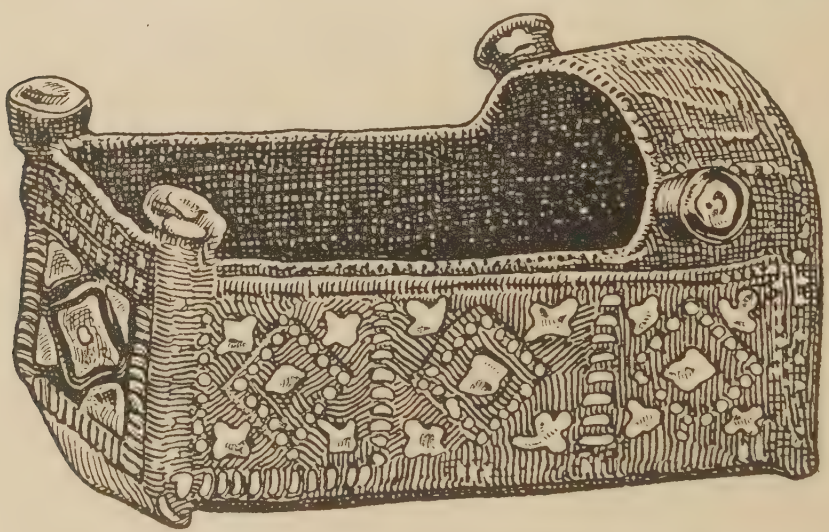
There can be little doubt that the more ambitious specimens of slip ware were made for presentation purposes on festival occasions. It seems a reasonable presumption that Toft and other potters made dishes and other articles for stock, and sold them to any customer who had not time or inclination to bespeak any particular design or inscription. It must be remembered that the potter would need at least a fortnight's notice before he could produce any special piece, and much longer if he was not firing his ovens regularly; therefore many purchasers would doubtless prefer to take a dish or tyg out of stock, if it appealed to their fancy, rather than wait several weeks. This would explain the variation in the signature at a time when it was evidently the custom to sign this kind of pottery. Undoubtedly one of the most important (and probably the most prolific) of the followers of Toft was Ralph Simpson, of Burslem, who flourished about 1710. There were three Simpsons potting in Burslem at this date, but Ralph is the only one who can be described with certainty as having made slip ware. Simpson frequently signed his full name, and occasionally contented himself by merely affixing his initials; but he rarely seems to have dated his productions.

There are a few slip-decorated pieces in private collections signed "John Simpson," but it is impossible to say whether he was related to Ralph.

In the South Kensington collection is a dish of coarse red ware with a border in brown slip on yellow ground. It is decorated in the centre with the "Pelican in her piety," and signed "Ralph Simpson." It is interesting to compare this dish with the one in the British Museum, decorated by Thomas Toft with the same subject, and illustrated on page 111.

There is also in the British Museum a large yellow glazed dish, signed on the border by Ralph Simpson.

This dish bears an extremely crude but very characteristic and amusing portrait of King William III., crowned. Mr. Solon has a dish with figures of William and Mary, also signed by Simpson, as well as a signed cradle with brown glaze and yellow slip. These cradles appear to have been made for christening

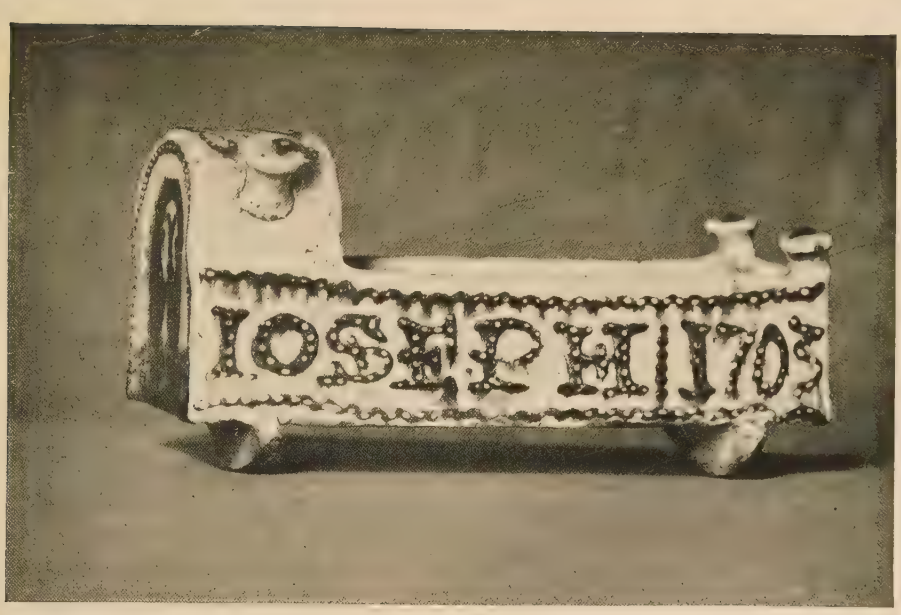


SLIP DECORATED CRADLE, DATED 1691. BRITISH MUSEUM. BY JOSEPH GLASS

presents, and some are inscribed with the name of the child or the names of the parents. Of the latter class is one inscribed—

WILLIAM SMITH
MARTHER SMITH.—1762.

A very interesting cradle, which we illustrate on the title page, bears neither name nor date. But the bold and simple expedient of diapering the surface with dabs of brown slip gives it a unique character among other slip cradles. It has an interest, too, as being made by Adams, of Hulton Abbey Pottery, a near relative



SLIP DECORATED CRADLE. JOSEPH GLASS, 1703. LENGTH, $9\frac{3}{4}$ INCHES

INCISED CRADLE. YELLOW GLAZE
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

of Adams of Greengates, the contemporary of Wedgwood, and is one of the many evidences that slip wares were frequently made by potters not usually associated with this class of ware.

Joseph Glass of Hanley, whose manufactory was in existence in 1710, produced fine wares of this class ; many fragments have been unearthed on the site of his pottery.

Examples of his work are in various collections. The Rev. W. T. Stanforth has a four-handled tyg bearing Glass's name ; and a large cradle, also signed, is owned by Mr. H. Griffiths, Brighton. Another interesting cradle, signed by Glass, is illustrated here, and is now in the possession of Dr. Glaisher. In the British Museum is a posset pot in brown and yellow slip, signed "Joseph Glass," with the letters S.V.H.G. ; and a small cradle (illustrated), decorated in the same way but unsigned. William Sans (mentioned by Chaffers) is represented in several collections ; and a Thomas Sans also made slip ware ; but only one or two known examples exist.

Two Wrights, John and William, also made slip decorated pottery about 1707. John is the more important, if we may judge by existing examples.

He is represented by a fine dish in the Burslem Museum. The well-known posset-pot in the British Museum inscribed "Ann Draper this cvp I made for yov, and so no more I.W. 1707" may be assigned to John Wright. Mr. J. E. Hodgkin has a large three-handled posset-pot, with raised upright bands between each handle, and at the bottom a pattern formed of a kind of conventional crocus. It bears the inscription : "George Ward made me this cup and so no more but God bless the Queen and all her Parleme—" At this point the artist ends his inscription for want of room. Mr. Hodgkin thinks this pot is by the same maker as the "Ann Draper." It would

not, however, necessarily follow, on account of the similarity of the inscription, that both dishes are by the same hand; moreover, the initial I, although it might very conceivably stand for John, could scarcely by any possibility stand for George. We are, however, convinced that the "Ann Draper" and the

SLIP DISH, W. W. 1749. HANLEY MUSEUM

John Wright dish in the Wedgwood Institute have an identical authorship. There is also in the Willett Collection another fine (eight-handled) posset-pot, which we illustrate on page 99, decorated with letters formed from strips of clay stuck on the pot, and impressed or indented with a notched stick. It has two horizontal bands above the handles; on the upper one

is inscribed: "I.W. May the 27th day 1706." The potter has ornamented the pot with the letters of the alphabet from A to K, with the initials A.K. added. Mr. Hobson suggests that the potter did this for want of something more appropriate, and we gather inferentially that he proceeded no further with the alphabet when he had filled his space. It is, however, much more probable that the initials of the person for whom the pot was intended—A.K.—account for this, and that the potter intended a sort of rough rebus, beginning and ending his alphabet with the initials of the recipient. It is probable, too, that this pot also was made by John Wright. Mr. Hodgkin has a quaint and pleasing dish by William Wright, signed, and dated 1709. It has a crowned female figure holding up a flower in each hand, and at either side of the head the initials Q.A., for Queen Anne. Ralph Turnor is also responsible for some interesting pieces.

A fine posset-pot in the Willett Collection is the one signed "William Chaterly, 1696." This, in its crocus motif, is reminiscent of the "Ann Draper" and "George Ward" pots.

A dish in the Willett Collection has four lions passant alternated with fleurs-de-lis, in dark brown on a yellow ground. In the centre is a wyvern perched upon a human body. The dish, which has an outer border, is inscribed with the initials R.S., and may be assigned to Robert Shaw. There is a dish in the Glaisher Collection having the same lion and fleur-de-lis border, but with a different device in the centre, representing apparently the soles of two large feet, with bands, but unsigned. A similar dish to the last-mentioned example also appears in the Willett Collection. Each of these dishes has the raised outlines peculiar to the dishes which are usually assigned to Cockpit Hill.

The initials R.S. are also those of Ralph Simpson, but

none of the ornamental "properties" resemble anything we remember to have seen in the work of Simpson.

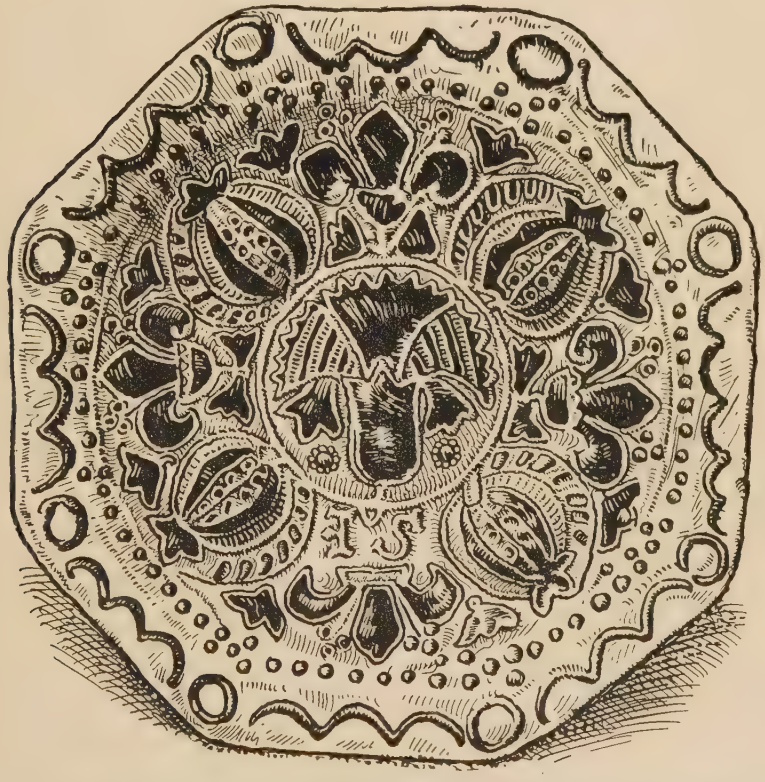
Robert (usually spelt "Robart") Shaw is also the author of several fine tygs, among others, one with three handles (and the remains of a spout), the lower half brown, decorated with conventional ornaments in a lighter colour, and the upper half in yellow with brown ornaments.

Of the examples given here from Dr. Glaisher's fine collection at Cambridge, the covered posset-pot, page 102, is one of the most remarkable. It has a frieze of animals executed in a rude and archaic manner, and somewhat recalling the animal friezes of Egyptian and Greek pottery, a notable feature of the colour scheme being the introduction of green. It is impossible to locate its place of manufacture, or to determine, with any degree of exactness, its date. It is almost identical with a pot from the Bateman Collection, given in Miss Meteyard's "Wedgwood," which is said to have been in the family from whom it was purchased for near four hundred years. It is difficult, however, to believe that any of the more picturesque slip pieces were produced much before, say, the latter years of the sixteenth century.

The great tyg from the Glaisher Collection given at page 116 is a magnificent specimen. Solon figures in his "Art of the Old English Potter" a similar one, but not so fine in character, and an inch and a half smaller.

The octagonal dish, with raised pomegranates alternated with fleurs-de-lis, and a conventionalised carnation in the centre, with the initials J.S. below, is an exceedingly rich and effective piece, and will well bear comparison as a piece of decoration with the fine productions of the Italian bottegas of the great time. A similar dish is figured in Solon's "Art of the Old English Potter," but with a different border.

In the Liverpool Museum is a large dish, 18¾ inches in diameter, signed "H. T. Tonkis," very similar in character to the Toft and Simpson dishes, with a bold figure of a cock and a trumpet, made probably for a tavern or hostelry. Liverpool



SLIP DISH, RAISED DECORATIONS. STAFFORDSHIRE OR COCKPIT HILL, DIAMETER 13 INCHES
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

has also a curious dish by William Talor, in brown-and-orange slip, with grotesque figures of William and Mary.

This last named potter has executed another dish with two full-length figures in the costume of the Stuarts, a gentleman holding in his hand his hat and feather, and the lady holding a bunch of flowers. This piece is naïve and charming in the extreme.

Other potters who made slip wares and signed their productions were James Johnson (1691); T. Johnson (1694); George Taylor (1700); W. Rich (1702); J. W. Ford (1744); and Job Heath, whose sisters married the two potters Neale and Palmer.

But many very interesting examples of slip ware are unsigned and unidentified. Among these is the very fine posset-pot from the Willett Collection with four handles, and the cover shaped like a crown. It has a rich reddish-brown glaze, and is decorated with a stellate pattern, impressed and alternated with horizontal rows of white spots. It is inscribed "MARY PARVISH her pot 1714." In the same collection is another posset-pot with two handles and cover, and the motto executed in slip, "The best is not too good for thee." This motto, sometimes slightly varied, is not uncommon in slip wares. Mr. F. Potts has one in yellow glaze and decorated with brown ornaments spotted with yellow. The motto is the same, but the word "you" is used instead of "thee." There is another one in Mr. G. Slater's collection, and we believe that Mr. Solon has also one.

OWL JUG. BRITISH MUSEUM

The British Museum also contains a fine puzzle jug of slip ware (seventeenth century). It has twisted snakes round the handle, but has no ornament on the body. It is illustrated on page 93.

Other interesting examples of the slip decorator's art are the owl jugs. One of these—a well-known specimen—illustrated here, is in the British Museum. The head forms the cover, and the body is marbled. The eye is frankly expressed by a spot of manganese, encircled by a broadish line in the same colour, but spotted with dots of white slip. Another large owl jug in the same collection (seventeenth century) is of yellowish clay, with the body ornamented with a pattern in slip.

A curious application of the slip process was its use for wall tablets and tombstones. Both were common in Staffordshire in the eighteenth and the latter part of the seventeenth centuries. In Burslem, Wolstanton, and other churchyards in the Potteries were many tombstones in brown or red clay with ornaments and inscriptions in relief, some in white slip, others inlaid. One is as late as 1828. Many from Wolstanton are now in the Mayer Collection at Liverpool, some being of great interest. How these objects have migrated from the churchyards to the museums is a mystery, but a number have disappeared from Wolstanton churchyard within our own recollection, and the few left are difficult to find, and of little interest.

There is a fine specimen in the British Museum, made of coarse clay covered with white slip, and glazed yellow. It has a floral design, the initials E.E. together with the date 1695 incised, and the inscription, "When this V C remember mee."

In one of the churchyards in the Potteries is a headstone with the following inscription:

"Here lieth the body of Mary Meller, who departed this life January the 6th 1750, aged 10.

Short was my time
Grate was my pane
Weep not for me
Great is my gaine."

SLIP DISH INSCRIBED S. M. BRITISH MUSEUM

We may reasonably include the "Tickenhall" productions under the heading of the Toft school, as in the first place it is by no means certain that the Tickenhall decorators were not supplied from Staffordshire, and in the second place the identity of the Tickenhall wares is (with the exception of the work of Meir) a matter of considerable dubiety. Many dishes are in existence which were executed after a fashion described in the preceding chapter, with a kind of *cloisonné* or partition of clay, into which slips of different colours were poured.

Two of the most interesting of these dishes are marked with the initials S.M., the identity of the artist not being known. Professor Church thinks that they may have been made by S. Meir, as it is known that one John Meir was working there in 1721. "On the other hand," he says, "there are some grounds for considering these moulded dishes to have been made at Tickenhall."

Whoever the artist may be, these plates (two of which are given from the British Museum collection) are designed in accordance with the best decorative traditions. In both, the principle of symmetry is absolutely observed. In the best of

SLIP DISH INSCRIBED S. M. BRITISH MUSEUM

the two—the one in illustration of the adage "one burd in The hand is Worth Two in the bush"—the "storiation" is clear, simple, and complete, the chief interest being very properly kept towards the top of the plate. The "burds" are drawn in profile, with no attempt at perspective; the "bush" has a single starting-point or root, and runs in an irregular meander along either side of the plate. The legend, together with the initials and date, are admirably disposed. The characters are of a good type.

SLIP MUG, BUFF WARE, DATED 1719.
BRITISH MUSEUM

In the other plate a plant is represented with a central stem throwing off two branches, each bearing a large flower having a centre resembling a grotesque face. On either side-branch is perched a "burd" with outstretched wings. Professor Church thinks they represent doves. Our artist, however, is evidently of the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who in dealing with the subject of drapery in one of his discourses says, "In the same manner as the historical painter never enters into the details of colours, so neither does he debase his conceptions with minute attention to the discriminations of drapery. It is the inferior style that marks the variety of stuffs." Our artist has a lofty indifference to ornithological exactness as regards species. On the other hand, he is particular in the matter of *sex*. It is clearly a cock and a hen, as the cock is plumed, and there is just the slight difference in the head and legs which imparts that sense of importance which

is proper to the male, or, more correctly speaking, which the male is in the habit of allocating to himself.

The process known as Graffito may be legitimately included

GRAFFITO HARVEST JUG, DATED 1708. BRITISH MUSEUM

with slip decoration, especially as the two processes were often employed in the same piece. The method was to coat a vessel of dark clay with a film of lighter clay, or *vice versa*, and scratch the design with a pointed tool through the film to the

ground beneath. It is an old and well-known process, and has been largely employed at different periods for the decoration of buildings, both exterior and interior. There are good examples of graffito as applied to pottery in the Staffordshire, Liverpool, and London museums, as well as in private collections, notably that of Mr. Solon. In the British Museum is a puzzle jug, with curious little plants and pots dotted over its body, upon which is inscribed, "Don't get drunk."

The extremely fine graffito Harvest Jug, illustrated on page 133, is dated 1708. The body is buff, and the background of the pattern is cut out and filled in with a soft brown. It is inscribed:

It is Cupids dart wounded my heart.
Lo i into your house am sent as a token from a frind
When you harvest folks are dry then I will them attend. 1708.

This jug is in the Willett Collection, British Museum.

Doubtless much of the interest attending these quaint wares is due to the inscriptions. The lettering itself is generally decorative and good in style; and the mottoes are always pertinent, sometimes having a dry humour which smacks strongly of the period when they were produced. Another Harvest Jug in the Willett Collection has the quaint motto:

Here you may see what I REQUST of HANST gentlemen, my BALY filed of the bast I com but now and then. 1716.

Another inscription runs:

Break me not I pray in youer haste for I fo non will give des taste 1674

A nest of six cups with handles entwined, from the collection of the late Mr. W. Edkins, has the following:

Fill me full drink of me while you woul S 1762 O

On a graffito jug in the Norwich Museum is:

Come Brother, Shall we Join
Give me your two-pence, here is mine. 1670.

SLIP HARVEST JUG
Hanley Museum

The Rt. Hon. Lord Wimborne has a brown bowl, on a stand, with four handles and a whistle. Inscribed on the outside edge is :

Come good weman, drink of the best
You, my lady, and all the rest.

Mr. Solon has a brown-glazed cradle with

The gift is small
But love is all.

MEMORIAL TABLET, GRAFFITO. BRITISH MUSEUM

A variation of the above substitutes "good will" for "love."

On a nest of cups with entwined and pierced handles belonging to the Somerset Archæological Society is the inscription :

Three merry boys 1697.

The following is a fairly common inscription for a puzzle jug, and occurs both on slip decoration and salt-glaze :

From Mother Earth I claim my birth ;
I'm made a joke for man,
But now I'm here, filled with good cheer,
Come, taste me if you can.

On a tyg in the British Museum appears this couplet with its curious spelling :

Brisk be to the med you desier
As her love you ma requare.

It is somewhat of a relief to find that the curious orthography of Staffordshire slip ware is not indigenous. On a large Wrotham two-handled flask or cistern is inscribed :

W
WE THE RIT GENNRAL CORNAL OFER THE DROUNKKEN REGMENT. N.H. 1678.

On a "metropolitan" water jug occurs the often quoted—

When this you see, remember me,

And, underneath, the solemn injunction—

Obeay Gods wourd.

An inscription mentioned by Mr. W. Bemrose in "Pottery and Porcelain of Derbyshire," runs :

God bless the Queen and Prence Gorge
Drink and be mery, and Mary B.B.
John Meir made this cup 1708.

It may be useful to give, in tabulated form, a list of the principal potters of the Toft school, and the order of the dates in which they are known to have been working—

Thomas Toft	*c.* 1660	John Wright	*c.* 1707
Ralph Toft	*c.* 1676	William Wright	
James Johnson	*c.* 1691	Ralph Simpson	*c.* 1710
Robert Shaw	*c.* 1692	Joseph Glass	*c.* 1710
T. Johnson.	*c.* 1694	William Talor	—
William Chaterly	*c.* 1696	Thomas Sans	—
George Taylor	*c.* 1700	William Sans	—
W. Rich	*c.* 1702	Job Heath	—

The rough work is, as Ruskin very truly says, at all events real. The slip wares of the seventeenth century represent one of the most vital developments of English ceramics.

These primitive slip decorations, with all their faults and limitations, present certain merits which might well be adopted with advantage by the modern potter; the simple gaiety and frankness, the recognition of the possibilities and limitations of the material, the sober colour, the character, and the quality of the lettering, might well be recommended to the producers of some of the wares at present in vogue.

CHAPTER XII

TRANSITION

We who sign
About this line
Hope none offence and mean none.
What a Dutchman can see on the sky; an
Englishman can find it in the sea, God willing!
And so say we
Whose names here be.

CHARLES READE'S *Round Robin.*

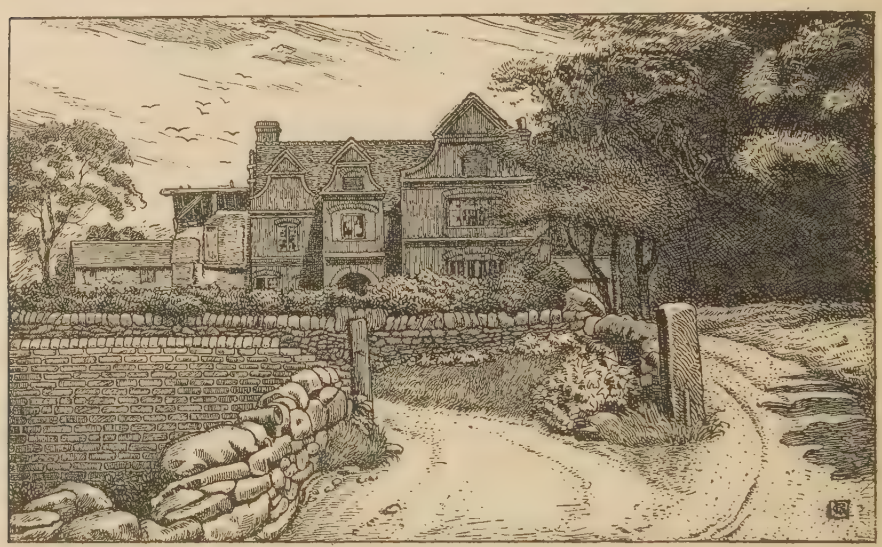
IN a community of simple, imaginative, and superstitious people, traditions spring easily into life and spread rapidly, losing nothing in the spreading. If this community happens to be secluded, and its intercourse with outsiders slight and intermittent, the mere passing visit of a stranger becomes an event of some importance. But in the further event of strangers who are obviously foreigners actually settling in such a locality, practising the staple industry, and conducting their proceedings in the most rigid privacy and secrecy, speculation is likely to become wild indeed, and stories concerning such people should be received with the greatest caution, especially when they have been transmitted through many generations. In the consideration of two of the most notable figures in the whole history of English ceramics—the brothers Elers—we have to deal with a mass of tradition, chiefly oral. The actual date of their arrival is not known, but writers generally agree that

they came to England with the Prince of Orange, afterwards King William III. "The Prince, however," says Jewitt, "did nothing to further the fortunes of the family, except the granting of a pension of £300 a year to the sister of the Elerses. This lady became the second wife of Sir William Phipps, the founder of the house of Mulgrave." David Elers appears to have spent very little time in Staffordshire, being occupied with the warehouse in the Poultry which was established for the sale of the Staffordshire productions.

John Philip Elers was the godson of the Elector of Mentz, after whom he was named, and was held at the baptismal font by Queen Christina of Sweden. The family, indeed, of the Elerses was of considerable antiquity and importance in the northern part of Saxony. Several places bear their name, as Elerswolf, Elersdorf, and Elersdorpt. Admiral Elers, who commanded the fleet at Hamburg, married a princess of the royal House of Baden. One son, Martin Elers, born of this marriage in 1621, is said to have claimed some of the honours and emoluments pertaining to the Baden family, and to have been involved thereby in a long and distressing litigation. Having, by a decision of the Aulic Council of the Empire, failed in his suit, and suffering in consequence serious financial loss, he removed to Amsterdam, and there married a daughter of Daniel van Mildret, a rich burgomaster. The bride is said to have brought her husband a tun of gold as dowry. She, too, seems also to have been in touch with royalty, for Henrietta Maria, the unfortunate Queen of the more unfortunate Charles I., is reported to have taken refuge in the house of Mynheer van Mildret, and to have often nursed his little daughter in her lap. Martin Elers, like his son John Philip (less is known of David), was a man of great intellectual

attainments, and was several times appointed ambassador to various Courts.

How, then, came these scions of this noble family to employ themselves as potters, and to settle in such a remote spot as

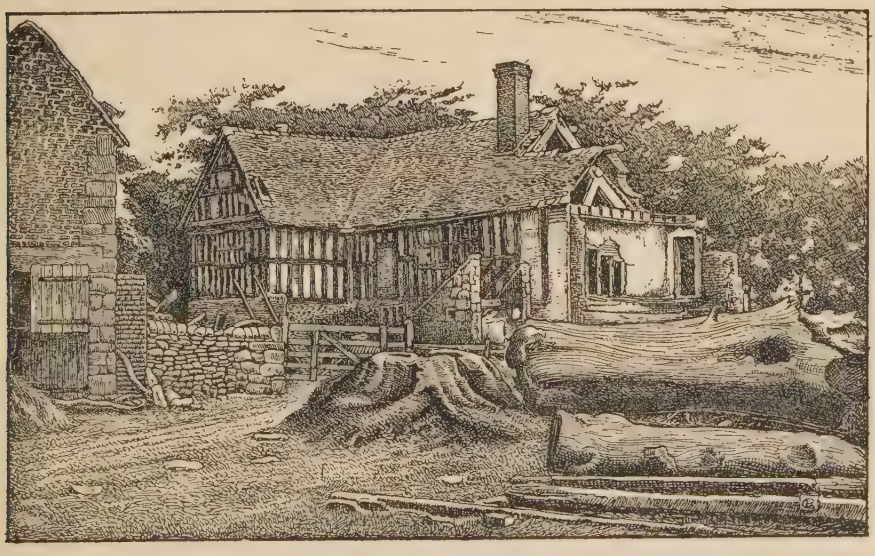


DIMSDALE HALL. FRONT VIEW

Bradwell? Seclusion, as a matter of course, they wanted; and the rich red clay of Bradwell, together with the close vicinity of coal, then very near the surface, made it an admirable spot for their purpose. But of the means by which the brothers Elers discovered this eminently suitable position we can only conjecture. Mr. Solon ("Art of the Old English Potter,") thinks, and with a considerable deal of probability, that the Elerses may have been in communication with Dwight, of Fulham, who had made, some years previously, a geological survey of Cheshire and Staffordshire. According to Shaw, the Elerses had a small pottery at Nuremberg before coming to England. There is no evidence of this, but it is not at all unlikely. It

is pretty certain that they did not learn their trade at Bradwell. Shaw, however, is exceedingly unreliable outside matters which come under his own personal notice. He cites a tradition to the effect that the Elerses had another small pottery at Dimsdale, which he says (and his statement is repeated by Jewitt) is at some distance from the public roads.

Shaw could scarcely have visited Dimsdale, otherwise he would have seen the extreme improbability of a pottery having existed there in the time of the Elerses ; the coach road between London and the north runs within a couple of hundred yards of Dimsdale Hall, as it did in the Elerses' time. It is true that the Hall is secluded, the trees being thickly planted. The road,



DIMSDALE HALL. FROM THE NORTH

too, lies below the level of the fields, which would hide the Hall from view, even in the absence of foliage. Unquestionably the Elerses lived at Dimsdale (at any rate, John Philip did), and the Hall was used for a warehouse as well as a residence. In such

a case the contiguity of the turnpike road was an advantage. The pack-horses or baggage-waggons passed near enough to be loaded without great inconvenience, and the stage-coaches could be utilised for small parcels ; in fact, the goods could be carried from Dimsdale to Cheapside without changing vehicles—a most important matter in those days. The sum of advantages to the Elerses in their Staffordshire domicile is so great that the recommendation of Dwight alone would hardly seem to account for their settlement in this particular spot. Even if Dwight suggested the topographical location of the clay-seams, he could hardly have directed them to the place above all others possessing all the advantages required. Another theory, at least as plausible, is that the Count de Tschirnhausen may have suggested the suitability of the Staffordshire clay-beds for the Elerses' purposes. Like the Elerses, Tschirnhausen was a native of Saxony, and was identified with Böttcher in the production of red wares of precisely similar character to those of the Elerses, and he is known some years previously to have visited Staffordshire. This, again, would no more account for their selection of such conveniently adjacent spots as Bradwell and Dimsdale than the Dwight theory does.

A much more likely theory is that the Elerses, who undoubtedly had the *entrée* into very good houses in England (J. P. Elers in 1699 married a Miss Banks, and thus became connected by marriage with the Vernon family), on arriving in London may have met, or at any rate heard of the Sneyds, whose tenants they became in Staffordshire, and who would be in a position to give them the necessary information. It is, of course, most probable that they would also seek out Dwight, as being the most accomplished potter of his day. The resemblance between the Elers and the Meissen red stonewares (they are

really porcelains in all but translucency) has always seemed to us more than a coincidence. The fact that both are imitations of Oriental models does not, however, sufficiently account for this resemblance.

We give illustrations (p. 144) of two teapots, one made by Böttcher about 1706 and another by the Elerses, from Mr. Jahn's collection. Both are extremely interesting. The Elers pot is thrown on the wheel, and the leaf-shaped panels are applied to the surface and shaped to the contour of the pot, which is of a beautiful clear red tint. The Böttcher pot is much darker and browner, and is fashioned from moulds. The background of the panels is gilt, and also the knob of the cover, and handle. These two pots are made of differently coloured clays, by two distinct processes. Yet in all essentials of design and craftsmanship they might have emanated from the same maker.

The round pot with elaborate ornamentation (illustrated p. 154) is also from Mr. Jahn's collection. It is attributed to the Elerses, probably correctly. Its finish as well as its colour seems to point to its Bradwell origin, and Messrs. Wedgwood have a salt-glazed block with this pattern, an indication that at any rate the pot was made in Staffordshire.

The followers of the Elerses, whilst adopting their methods, seem to have soon abandoned the practice of making wares in simple red, and to have added decorations in another, or several other coloured clays. They probably knew nothing of the Oriental prototypes which the Elerses and Böttcher had in mind. The last-mentioned little teapot has a metal spout, and a metal knob to the cover, both fitted inside with a screw attachment. In the Liverpool Museum is a similar one. We also give an illustration (p. 144) of another teapot belonging to Mr. Jahn, formerly in the collection of the Marquis of Huntly. It is of similar colour to

the Böttcher teapot—a brownish clay, finely levigated, and fired to semi-vitrifaction. Like all the red stonewares of the period it has no maker's stamp, but carries an imitation Chinese mark on the bottom. It might easily pass for a veritable specimen of Oriental ware but that some of the details of the imitation Chinese decorative "properties" are decidedly Occidental. We cannot fix its origin, but it is interesting as an exemplar of the Elers school.

The best-known pieces of the Elers *fabrique* are of a bright, rich red tone. But colour alone cannot be taken as a criterion. Shaw says, "Here for some time the brothers made Red Porcelain Unglazed Tea Pots, merely of the fine red clay of Bradwell, and a small proportion of the ochreous clay from Chesterton, to vary the shade; and also Black Porcelain, or Egyptian, by adding manganese in proportions agreeable to the dark shade wished for. The remaining specimens show that some degree of success resulted; the price was from *twelve to twenty-four* shillings each; they have a fine grain, and are excellent in form and every quality except ornaments (which are coarse and grotesque), and will ever manifest the ingenuity and enterprise of their fabricators." It is difficult to imagine what Shaw meant by the "ornaments." If he meant the applied ornaments on the wares, they are never coarse, and rarely grotesque. But even supposing they were both, the method of application, together with other improvements (such as the use of the lathe), marked a fresh era in the pottery of this country. Popular traditions regarding the Elerses and their ways were many. Shaw is chiefly responsible for their perpetuity; and allowing something for exaggeration, some of them may have had a basis of fact. The secrecy with which the manufacture was conducted can scarcely be doubted.

The tradition that all unsaleable pieces were smashed into

ELERS AND BÖTTCHER TEAPOTS
Hanley Museum. Jahn Collection

TEAPOT—ELERS STYLE. FORMERLY IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MARQUIS OF HUNTLY
Hanley Museum. Jahn Collection

small fragments and buried in secret places is at least supported by the fact that few known fragments of Elers ware have ever been found among the *débris* which always exists on the site of a factory, either in the vicinity of Dimsdale or Bradwell, although repeated searches have been made. The story of their reluctance to employ anybody but imbeciles is absurd on the face of it. The Elerses would be the very last persons to employ idiots *because* they were idiots. They would certainly take every precaution to avoid the employment of persons likely to be connected with other potteries, and an apparent weakness of intellect might have weighed with them in the case of Astbury or other persons, so long as they were convinced of the capacity of the individual to fulfil his task, however unskilled. Shaw says, "Their servants were the most ignorant and stupid persons they could find. . . . In this state the processes were pursued, when a person named Twyford, from Shelton, obtained employment under them, and had sufficient prudence to manifest entire carelessness and indifference to every operation he witnessed or participated."

This description of Twyford's attitude and demeanour seems reasonable and unexaggerated. Contrast Shaw's account of Astbury: "A very singular method of ascertaining all their processes is currently reported to have been adopted by another person named Astbury (known by his acquaintance as very acute and ingenious, and well capacitated to effect all requisite developments). Having assumed the garb and appearance of an idiot, with all proper vacancy of countenance, he presented himself before the manufactory at Bradwell, and submitted to the cuffs, kicks and unkind treatment of masters and workmen, with a ludicrous grimace, as the proof of the extent of his mental ability. When some food was offered to him he

only used his fingers to convey it to his mouth, and only when helped by other persons could he understand how to perform any of the labours to which he was directed. He next was employed to move the treadle of an *Engine Lathe*, a very different machine from those of this day, and by perseverance in his assumed character he had opportunity of witnessing every process, and examining every utensil they employed. On returning home each evening he formed models of the several kinds of implements, and made memorandums of the processes, which practice he continued a considerable time (near two years is mentioned), until he ascertained that no further information was likely to be obtained, when he availed himself of a fit of sickness to continue at home, and this was represented as most malignant, to prevent any persons visiting him. After his recovery he was found so *sane* that Messrs. Elers deemed him unfit longer to remain in their service, and he was discharged, without suspicion that he possessed a knowledge of all their manipulations." All this may be condensed in the simple statement that Astbury, like Twyford, manifested "entire carelessness and indifference" to what he saw, and he probably added an affectation of lack of comprehension. But we cannot believe that Messrs. Elers would consider imbecility an absolute qualification, even for menials, especially when the idiot could not understand his allotted tasks, and had to be "helped by other persons." Nor can we think that Messrs. Elers would habitually submit a poor imbecile to "cuffs, kicks and unkind treatment," or allow their workmen to do so.

Few writers venture to doubt that the introduction of salt-glazing in Staffordshire was due to the brothers Elers. It is, however, still an open question, and, until fresh and more convincing evidence is forthcoming, likely to remain so. The theory is

founded altogether on the old tale of the potters of Burslem (*eight* in number) going to Bradwell to protest against the nuisance caused by the volumes of dense smoke and flame emanating from the Bradwell ovens. In the first place there were considerably more than eight potters in Burslem at that date. Wedgwood, writing to Bentley in January, 1777, says, "It is only about eighty years since Mr. Elers was amongst us, when there was as many potworks in Burslem as there is now." Wedgwood's accuracy on historical questions is not always beyond question, but on this point he is mainly confirmed by the registers in Burslem old church.

We give a photograph (p. 218) of the signatures to an interesting document which is preserved among the registers. It is partly a petition and partly a requisition from the leading churchmen of the town, asking that the collections shall be in future used for the church and not devoted to the *private uses of the churchwardens*. There are at least fourteen known manufacturers in the list. The date is 1707.

The salt-glazing process does *not* give off dense smoke *and* flame, and the fumes from an ordinary-sized oven would never reach Burslem from Bradwell. Moreover, Bradwell pottery did not possess "ovens," but only *one* oven, much smaller than ordinary. We may venture here to accept Simeon Shaw's testimony. He says, "The oven itself had *five* mouths, but neither holes over the inside flues or bags, to receive the salt, had any been used by them; nor scaffold on which the person might stand to throw it in. The foundations were very distinctly to be seen in 1808, though now covered by an enlargement of the barn. E. Wood, and J. Riley, Esqs., both separately measured the inside diameter of the remains, at about *five* feet; while the other ovens, of the same date, in Burslem, were *ten* or *twelve* feet.

Mr. John Mountford, twenty-seven years since (1802), took down the remains of the oven, and he states that the height was about *seven* feet, but not like the salt-glaze ovens. It was adapted to fire choice articles; and as the most careful research and inquiry in every direction near the spot supply fragments of red unglazed porcelain, and blue pottery (probably made by Mr. Cookworthy, or his relation Mr. Marsh, who succeeded Messrs. Elers at Bradwell farm; and whose relation, Jacob Marsh, Esq., now resides at Lane End), there is every probability that only the Red Porcelain and Black were made here, as the oven is only adapted for such productions."

Salt-glazed ware *at this time*, says Shaw, was cheap. The salt-glaze ovens were required to be large and high, with holes in the dome to allow the salt to be thrown in. The tiny oven of the brothers Elers would be useless for such a purpose. The process of salt-glazing may have originated in Staffordshire by a variety of simple means. There is nothing really unlikely in the story of the female servant of Mr. Joseph Yates of Stanley Farm about 1680. "In boiling a strong brine of common salt, to be used for curing pork, the liquor boiled over during her temporary absence and ran down the sides of the vessel." Becoming red-hot, the muriatic acid decomposed the surface, and when cold, the places were partially glazed. Mr. Palmer had a small pottery at Bagnall, a mile away, and it is said that, being shown the pot, he availed himself of the hint and commenced making the common brown ware of our day. He was soon followed by other manufacturers, and the process became generally adopted.

The objection has been repeatedly urged that such a heat could not possibly fuse sodium chloride into a glaze. Such an argument is puerile. We have ourselves glazed pieces

of biscuit in an ordinary kitchen fire with common salt. It is true that the fusion is incomplete, and that the "glaze" can be scraped off with a knife. But there is quite enough to give a hint to any intelligent potter, who would try the salt at a greater heat, and thus attain the proper result by the action of the decomposed soda upon the silica in the body. To sum up, there is nothing whatever to show that the Elerses ever produced a single piece of salt-glazed ware. Against the tradition of the Burslem potters and the volumes of smoke (supported, we must remember, by the testimony of the old man Steel, who told Josiah Wedgwood that he had seen the smoke from Bradwell), we have the fact that the Crouch wares in their archaic period were at least contemporaneous with the productions of the brothers Elers.

Between 1710 and 1715 there were in Burslem six ovens used for stoneware, and the countryside potters of Green Head, Red Street, and Holden Lane seem to have made the rough brown salt-glazed ware between twenty and thirty years earlier. Dwight also made salt-glazed stoneware at Fulham as early as 1671, and a patent was granted to Rous and Cullen in 1626 for the manufacture of stoneware "same as that manufactured in Germany." Professor Church thinks that "on the whole, it is likely that though the Elerses did introduce glazing with salt into Staffordshire, they did not largely practise the process themselves." To us there seem no grounds whatever for supposing that the brothers Elers ever practised salt-glazing at all. They had, as we have seen, only one oven, which was not at all adapted for salt-glazing. Every piece that can be attributed to them with any degree of certainty is biscuit, and they seem to have confined their efforts entirely to the production of pottery on the lines of Oriental red wares. The Palmer of Bagnall

story is quite unimportant as affecting the real issue. If it is a myth, it does not leave the brothers Elers as the only source from which the practice of salt-glazing could be be obtained by the Staffordshire potters; and as we have shown, there is no adequate reason why the Palmer story should be contemptuously dismissed as "absurd."

CHAPTER XIII

THE PASSING OF THE ELERSES

What is this knowledge but the skie-stolne fire,
For which the thiefe still chain'd in ice doth sit,
And which the poor rude satyre did admire,
And needs would kisse, but burnt his lips with it?

The wits that div'd most deepe and soar'd most hie,
Seeking man's pow'rs haue found his weakness such;
Skill comes so slow, and life so fast doth flie;
We learne so litle, and forget so much.

SIR JOHN DAVIES, 1599.

DAVID ELERS, as we have already pointed out, spent most of his time at the Poultry in charge of the London warehouse, leaving John Philip to divide his time between the pottery and his residence and warehouse in the old mansion at Dimsdale. Whether he lived a solitary life as a bachelor in the staid old house among the trees, or whether he brought his young wife to brighten the silent old rooms, we cannot tell. He had one son Paul, probably born years later in London, for we find the son writing to Wedgwood in October, 1776, which would make him over sixty years of age at the time of this correspondence, even if he were born after his father had finally left Staffordshire in 1710.

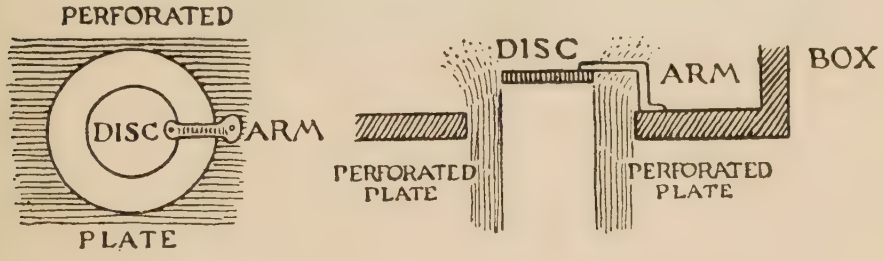
The Hall in Elers's day (it is situated about a mile from Wolstanton, a mile and a half from Newcastle, and a little over two miles from Burslem) must have been an ideal place for the

residence of such a man. The pottery lay over the fields, on the southern edge of Bradwell Wood, about a mile away. Tradition (in this instance correct) told of a mysterious means of communication between the Hall and the pottery, which was believed to take the form of a system of speaking tubes or pipes running from one place to the other. Shaw quotes them as an instance of the secrecy and jealousy of the Elerses, and suggests that they were employed to warn either place of the approach of any stranger, or "spy." It is much more likely that they were used in the ordinary way of business as a telephone is to-day.

The story was for many years received with amused tolerance as an old wife's tale, more or less mythical, until accident revealed the actual existence of the pipes. Mr. G. W. Rhead, senior, of Clayton, who was for some years master of the Longton and Fenton Art Schools, with a branch class at Chesterton, had, at the latter place, a pupil named William Wall, who afterwards became a builder, and was employed, during the year 1900, by a company of brewers to make certain alterations in a tavern called the "Bradwell House," standing on the site of the Elerses' pottery. The inn is on the side of a steep bank, and part of the premises are sunk in the side of this bank. Among other alterations the cellars required enlargement, and during the excavations, in removing a wall, a number of pipes were found, together with a kind of cup, having no handle or bottom, evidently used for an ear or mouthpiece. Mr. Wall kept this cup and several of the pipes, but, being unacquainted with the history of the Elerses, applied to a well-known local archæologist, who, however, did not perceive the connection of these pipes with the Elers tradition, or the site of their works. Mr. Wall then thought of his old

teacher, Mr. Rhead, who at once saw the importance of the discovery, and arranged for the possession of the pipes to place in his collection. They are at present exhibited in the Hanley Museum.

The illustration gives a fair idea of these interesting relics, which are well made. Each one is socketed at one end like an ordinary cast-iron gas pipe. They are of a kind of buff white pipe-clay (then abundant at Shelton), and fired fairly hard. It is difficult to determine exactly their method of manufacture, as they show no seam, and have certainly not



been made by the modern method of making such pipes, which consists of squeezing the pipes by screw pressure through a perforated plate in the bottom of an iron box. By this method the hollow is automatically cut out by a little metal disc the size of the required aperture, which is held in its place a little *above* the hole through which the pipes are squeezed.

The arm holding the disc is strong and thin, something like a penknife blade with the edge held upwards. The arm, of course, cuts the pipe open down one side (or down both sides if there are two arms, as is sometimes the case), but the continued pressure of the soft clay on the sides of the perforation in the plate *below* completely closes up the cut. A

pipe made in this way can always be identified by examination of the inside. The inside edges of the cut, though completely welded together, are never absolutely even. Any unevenness on the *outside* of the pipe is smoothed down by the pressure on the perforated plate in the bottom of the box. The Elers pipes are as smooth inside the bore as they are outside. They have probably been made by rolling a sheet of clay, beaten out to the required thickness, round a wooden or iron core or rod. When the clay has partially dried, and attained the proper degree of stiffness, the core is drawn out. The discovery of these pipes forms a strong link in the incomplete chain of evidence concerning the brothers Elers, they establish beyond any possibility of doubt the exact site of the Elerses' works.

About twenty years ago, we had a cursory sight of the principal rooms in the old Hall, which was occupied by a farmer, who stored his potatoes in the reception-room. There was a danger of these vegetables rotting the finely carved wainscot which covered the walls; we took the liberty of suggesting that the carved portion of the wainscot was of some value, and some time after, perhaps eighteen months, we heard of a portion of these carvings being offered for sale in the form of old chests, by a dealer in antique furniture.

In the May of this year (1906) we obtained permission from the executors of the estate to inspect the Hall. We confess to having entertained some dim hopes of a possibility of discovering some trace of the Dimsdale end of the speaking-tubes. The walls are stripped of the panelling, which lies in heaps about the bedrooms, leaving the walls bare for a thorough examination, which we duly made, but without result. One wing has been taken down, and the northern side of the house is open "to all the winds that blow." The cellars were filled

ELERS PIPES
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

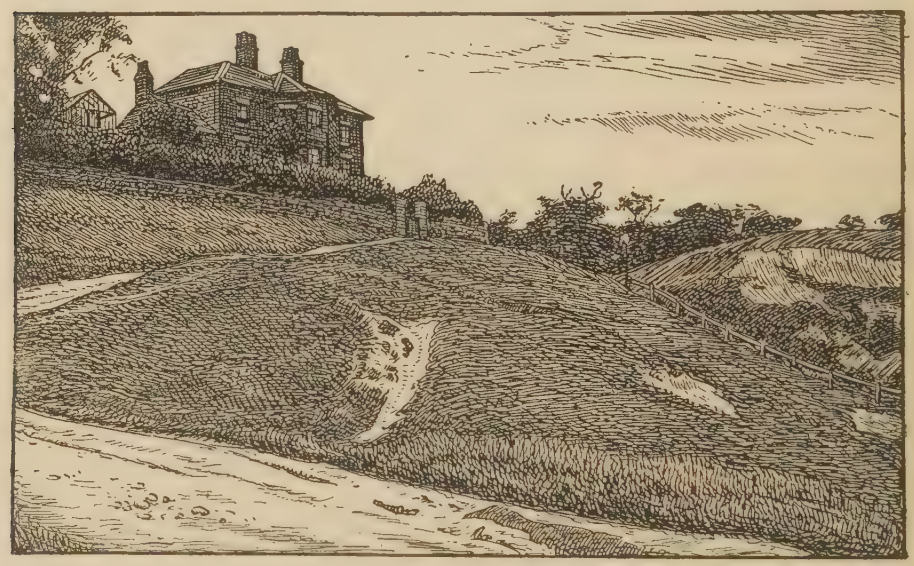
ELERS AND ASTBURY TEAPOTS
Hanley Museum

up some years ago, so that if the pipes were carried to this spot, there is little probability of their discovery unless systematic excavations are made, which is extremely unlikely.

The panels above referred to possess some interest. They are in squares, twelve or fourteen inches across, and five or six inches apart, with a fluted frieze at the top, beautifully cut. In each panel is a circular smear, which it appears was formerly a painted landscape in the manner of Claude, together with representations of birds and animals. The panels, landscapes, etc., were thickly encrusted with dirt, through the rooms being used for the housing of live-stock, and when they were scraped the paintings were practically destroyed. The mansion, we believe, is soon to be demolished; but its generally forlorn condition—the bags of turnips in the corners of the rooms, the empty sacks stuffed in the broken windows, the lively clucking of poultry, and the egotistical grunting of a litter of young pigs—cannot rob the place of a certain mournful dignity. The trees cast shadows like no other shadows, and the leaves swish against the walls and windows with a strange, unfamiliar sound. A patriarchal rook (the rookery is still inhabited) sits on a bough a few yards from the broken window, and apparently views our movements with grave disapproval. It is a very, very old rook, staid, magisterial, wonderfully glossy, and miraculously black. It is so little in touch with the reaping-machine, which we see below in the meadows, and so much less in accord with the broken windows, bare rafters, and the green lichen-stains on the walls, that it leads our fancy to the time when these garden paths were trim, these rooms prosperous-looking, but not ostentatious, shady, but not dim, and still, but not drowsy.

Our thoughts turn to the great potter who once inhabited

the place, and we fancy him soberly dressed in black, with clear-cut features and dark, steady eyes. John Philip Elers was known to be an excellent mathematician, and the device of the pipes is such as we might expect him to initiate. As before mentioned, the cellars of the old house are filled up. We made searching inquiries respecting this operation (which was performed some years ago) and discovered an old farm servant who had assisted in the work, and who



BRADWELL HOUSE, SITE OF THE ELERSES' POTTERY

informed us that there were supposed to be *two* subterranean passages, one to Bradwell and one to Chesterton Old Hall, a little over half a mile away. He declared he had himself entered one to the distance of a few feet, but, being choked with rubbish, and continuing an unknown distance in the form of a kind of culvert, he had gone no further, but satisfied himself of its continuation. His story is confirmed by everybody about the farm, which is a new building in the garden of the

Hall, the farmer previously living in the Hall itself. He further declared that the Hall was formerly surrounded by a "ford," by which he meant a moat. There is certainly a kind of trench (with pools of water at intervals) encircling (with occasional breaks) the whole house and gardens. The Hall is situated at the extreme northern end of Wolstanton Marsh, and within our own remembrance, before the marsh was drained, the whole ground about the Hall was swampy. There is, too,

BRADWELL WOOD

within fifty or sixty yards of the Hall, a brook or runlet, which might easily have fed or supplied a moat with water. We mention these details because we believe that the deep alcove or recess continuing in a narrow culvert (which un- undoubtedly existed in the cellar) had reference to the system of communication by pipes. It would not necessarily follow that the pipes would terminate in the cellar; in fact, it would be very unlikely that any one needing to use this speaking-

tube would descend to the cellar on every occasion, unless the cellars (which were very large) were used to store the ware. But the moat has to be taken into consideration. The pipes would have to go under the moat, and this alcove in the cellar, with its culvert, it seems to us, was no subterranean passage, but merely a casing to carry the pipes under the moat. They might easily have been carried upwards from the cellar to any part of a room in the house. A peculiar feature of the other cellar at Bradwell House, where the other end of the pipes was discovered, is that while the interior of the cellar is dug from the earth in the side of the bank, the entrance is open to the street. An illustration of this is given at page 156. The gateway seen in front of the house is not the entrance to the house, but to the *cellar*, which may be seen from the roadway through a kind of barred grating.

Of the Elerses' work we give (p. 144) one undoubted example. Many reputed examples abound in various collections, but the practice of stamping the ware with an imitation of Chinese marks, and never with the name of the maker, makes it difficult to assign any piece with certainty to the makers. On the other hand, the imitators of the Elerses were not long satisfied with the simple effect of the red and black ware alone, and sometimes added decorations in other coloured clays. Many obvious attempts to imitate Elers ware have been made, both by their contemporaries and their early followers. The title "Elers Ware" is employed as a generic term to describe all red and black wares of the type. In the veritable Elers pieces the turning was most carefully and skilfully done, and as far as the application of the ornament is concerned, the original method adopted by the Elerses is sufficient (to a skilful potter) to distinguish a veritable Elers from an imitation. Where the ornament was needed a

TEAPOT—ELERS STYLE
South Kensington Museum

little piece of wet clay was applied, and on this a kind of metal seal with a sunk ornament was stamped, exactly in the same manner as one impresses a seal in sealing-wax. The surplus clay around the edges was then carefully cleaned away. Occasionally several seals were employed for one piece.

When leaves, etc., were stamped, the connecting stems were made, stuck on, and finished by hand. The followers of the Elerses varied this process. They made the ornaments in the mould itself, cleaning the edges before the "sprig," as it was called, was taken from the mould, and applying the moulded sprig to the ware, using a little thin slip to cause adhesion. This was the process employed by Wedgwood in his jasper figures. By a careful examination of some of the known imitations of Elers, the method above described will be clear. In parts the sharp, uncleaned edges as delivered from the mould will be detected, while the stamped ornaments would have to be cleaned away with the tool in every portion.

The Elerses left Staffordshire in 1710. "Mortified at the fact that their precaution had been unavailing, disgusted by the inquisitiveness of the Burslem potters, and convinced that they were too far distant from the principal market for their productions, they at length discontinued manufacture at Bradwell, and removed to a manufactory in the vicinity of London, where a branch of the family is now resident." Thus Shaw, palpably speculating. John Philip is said to have become connected with the glass manufactory established by Venetians at Chelsea in 1676 under the auspices of the Duke of Buckingham. We know that he settled for some time at Battersea or Vauxhall, and afterwards, with the assistance of Lady Barrington, set up as a glass and china merchant in Dublin, and became prosperous.

David Elers became a merchant in London. He died unmarried, and was buried in Battersea.

John Philip Elers left a son, Paul, who was educated as a barrister and had chambers in the Temple. He had a close friend, a Grosvenor, who employed Paul to draw up the marriage settlement for his prospective bride. The lady was an heiress of the Oxfordshire Hungerfords, and while the settlements were being prepared the lovers quarrelled, and the lady transferred her affections to Elers, who shortly afterwards married her, gave up the Bar, and retired to settle on their estates. By some means, however, he soon afterwards became involved, the entail was cut off, and the estates passed to the Duke of Marlborough. Mr. Paul Elers had nine children. The eldest son was a lieutenant in the 70th Regiment, the second in the navy. The eldest daughter, Maria, married Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and was consequently mother to Maria Edgeworth. Three other daughters married clergymen. Another daughter, Rachel, married Captain Hopkins, R.M., who was killed on board the *Bellerophon* at the battle of the Nile. The eldest son, Paul George Elers, married a Miss Debonaire, and by her had three sons, two of whom were officers in the army and the third a lieutenant in the navy. This son, Lieutenant Edward Elers, married Miss Eliza Younghusband, and by her had four children. While these children were still young, Lieutenant Elers died, and his widow married Sir Charles Napier, who gave the four children his own name in addition to that of Elers.

The name of Elers, then, has in direct succession died out, but the children of Lieutenant Edward Elers were: Major-General Edward Hungerford Deleval Elers-Napier; Elizabeth Anne Elers-Napier (married to Colonel Cherry, 1st Madras Light

Cavalry); Captain Charles George Elers-Napier, R.N.; and Georgiana Elers-Napier, married to Major Lacy.

The Elerses, therefore, so far as they can be traced both ways, may be truly called people of distinction.

Apart from the advantages of birth and position the Elerses as potters were "select." With their finely levigated clays, from which everything coarse was eliminated, their finished and polished workmanship, and their dainty and tasteful designs, which never became common, they surely placed the stamp of their breeding upon their productions, and this distinction still lingers around the ruin of the building they vacated nearly two hundred years ago.

Paul Elers, son of John Philip, and grandfather of Maria Edgeworth, gentleman, once more comes incidentally into touch with ceramics in 1776. We find him writing to Josiah Wedgwood, whose fame had doubtless reached him, and occasionally, indeed, treading on Wedgwood's corns, if we may be permitted the expression. Paul, at the outset, wrote to Wedgwood, offering a portrait of his father, J. P. Elers, to be copied in jasper. Wedgwood gratefully accepted the offer, and a correspondence was thus opened. Elers followed up the letter with an inquiry as to the annual amount of pottery manufactured in Staffordshire. In those days of readily imposed taxes and high tariffs, such a query demanded great circumspection in the answer, and Wedgwood was nothing if not circumspect. He consulted Sparrow, asking him if any account had been issued in connection with certain petitions for extended facilities for transit in the way of navigation and turnpike roads. Sparrow advised caution, and gave Wedgwood an unflattering account of his correspondent. Wedgwood gave Elers the amount estimated for the year 1725 (fifty years

previously), which was £15,000 for the whole potteries, and which must have been considerably less than Wedgwood's own turnover alone. In this letter Wedgwood enclosed his catalogue, and asked Elers's acceptance of some specimens of his medallion portraits.

Four months later we hear more of the portrait of J. P. Elers. In January, 1777, Wedgwood writes to Bentley: "I hope you have read Mr. Elers's fine letter, and are preparing to send down the heads of all the illustrious men in all the Courts and countries of Europe to be immortalised in our artificial jasper. There is one, however, we must send for and copy, or offend this good gentleman. I mean his father's, from his son's in Ormond St., where it is waiting for that purpose. I shall be glad to have it copied by Mr. Day, or R^h Unwin—which you think proper, and from that copy Hackwood shall model it—sometime."

More "fine letters" followed; "of which," said Wedgwood, "I am sick and surfieted." The portrait of Elers was modelled and produced in the summer of 1777. Wedgwood again writes to Bentley: "He (Mr. Elers) returns thanks for the heads, and asks if he could be indulged with about half a doz^n of these Portraits, for his friends are pretty numerous. How far must we indulge this good gentleman's wants and wishes? He further acquaints me that he has, in order that these representations of his father may be more cheaply extended and diffused, desired Mr. Bentley to send one of the heads to an engraver to have an engravement for a print to be made, and directed this inscription to be on the copper, '*Johannes Philipus Elers, Plastices Britannicæ Inventor.*' This inscription, if I understand it, conveys a falsehood, and can therefore do no honour to the memory of his father, who was not *the* inventor

RED ENGINE-TURNED WARE: CREAM JUG, SQUARE CHINESE MARK; SUGAR-BOX, NO MARK;
TEAPOT AND COVERED JUG MARKED "ASTBURY"

of the art of Pottery in Britain, if there be any difference between inventing and *improving* an art."

Mr. Wedgwood then goes on to detail his ideas on the improvements of Elers, and it is very interesting to note the opinions of this great potter on the work of his great predecessor. "It is now about 80 years," continues Wedgwood, "since Mr. Elers came amongst us, when there was as many potworks in Burslem as there is now, and has been from time immemorial: and the reason for Mr. Elers fixing his experiments in Staffordshire, to try his experiments, seems to be that the pottery was carried on there in a much larger way and in more improved state than any other part of Britain. The improvements made by Mr. Elers in our manufactory were precisely these: Glazing our common clays with salt, which produced Pot d'grey *(sic)* or stoneware, and this after they had left the country was improved into white stoneware by using the pipe-clay of this neighbourhood and mixing it with flint stones calcin'd and reduced by pounding it into a fine powder. . . .

"The next improvement introduced by Mr. Elers was the refining of our common red clay by sifting and making it into tea and coffee ware in imitation of the Chinese Red Porcelain by the casting it in plaster moulds and turning it on the outside upon Lathes, and ornamenting it with the tea branch in relief; in imitation of the Chinese manner of ornamenting the ware. For these improvements—and very great ones they were—we are indebted to the very ingenious Messrs. Elers, and I shall gladly contribute all in my power to honour their memories and transmit to posterity the knowledge of the obligations we owe to them; but the sum total certainly does not amount to 'Inventing the Art of Pottery in Britain.' And I think it would

be injuring their memories to assert so much, for which I may quote the adage, 'Grasp all, and lose all.'"

This is, on the whole, a fair and manly estimate of his great predecessor and teacher, for there can be no question that the Wedgwood method of applying embossments was the direct outcome of the process initiated by the Elerses. It is curious how many mistakes (perhaps through carelessness or hurried writing) Wedgwood makes in this short letter. Elers certainly did not come to Staffordshire because potting "was carried on in a more improved state than any other part of Britain," which of itself is doubtful. Even if this latter statement was accurate, it had nothing to do with the Elerses coming, for their every action shows a determination to keep the Staffordshire potter and his improvements (or lack of them) at a distance. The salt-glazing is a controversial matter; but Wedgwood's statement that the Elerses made ware "by casting it in plaster moulds and turning it on the outside upon Lathes," is astounding. To turn cast ware upon a lathe is a feat so difficult as to be nearly impossible. And there are no compensating advantages. Plaster moulds were not introduced in Staffordshire until 1740—thirty years after Elers left. The nearest approach to plaster was the native gypsum, or alabaster, from which moulds were sometimes carved; but casting in this material would be costly and tedious, on account of the slow absorption of moisture. Wedgwood seems to have been considerably worried by the correspondence of Paul Elers, who certainly does not seem to have formed a fair estimate of Wedgwood's artistic ability and taste. We find him writing to suggest the manufacture of drainage pipes, much to Wedgwood's disgust. Later we find Wedgwood writing to Bentley: "I ask the good gentleman's pardon, for he may mean well, but when he advises us to

'apply our composition' (jasper, to wit) to the making of reservoirs in fortifications, the whole of one solid mass, for the preservation of records, magazines, etc., so as to be *Bomb proof*, and when one is obliged to reply to such extravagancies, it is teizing at least."

Thou good, frank, patient Wedgwood, it is indeed "teizing." That thou should'st be required to make Karchesia, Amphoræ, Œnochœ, or what not, with a surface like the skin of an apricot, a colour like wild hyacinths in May, and figured, not unworthily, with presentations of Ares, Eros, Hermes, Zeus, and Pallas-Athēnē, is much. But to make them bomb-proof, too——

CHAPTER XIV

SALT-GLAZE

BOTTLE, "SCRATCHED BLUE." BRITISH MUSEUM

IT was inevitable that the fine German and Flemish stonewares of the sixteenth century should have their counterpart or parallel in this country. These, however, were the outcome of a great decorative tradition; they were produced at a time when the decorative arts generally were still maintaining a high pitch of excellence, and while we cannot claim for the Staffordshire salt-glazed stoneware the same accomplished technique of the stonewares of Siegburg, they were in no sense an imitation of their German prototypes, but possessed a character quite their own, distinctly original, both as regards material and treatment.

The earliest English stoneware was made by John Dwight, who was M.A. and B.C.L. of Christ Church, Oxford, and was for some time Registrar to the Bishop of Chester. Dwight migrated from Chester, first to Wigan about the year 1668, and afterwards to Fulham, where he settled, at some period between the years 1671 and 1676.

In 1671 we find him taking out his first patent, declaring that he had solved the "mistery of the Cologne wares"; and, during

the thirty years which he practised as a potter at Fulham, he produced a series of portrait busts, statuettes, and drinking and other vessels which are unique in the annals of the ceramic arts. His bust of Prince Rupert, in the British Museum, is of itself sufficient evidence that he was an accomplished artist, a modeller of the first order; and the recumbent effigy of his little daughter Lydia, in the museum at South Kensington, possesses the refined and delicate qualities which we associate with the work of Flaxman.

Recent discoveries have thrown a quaint light on Dwight's personal character. Some years ago, while taking down some of the old buildings at Fulham, the workmen discovered a vaulted chamber which had been securely walled up. A careful examination disclosed a number of stoneware ale pots, bellarmines, and other examples of Dwight's pottery. Two memorandum books were found among a number of old ledgers. One of these books contained recipes, and the other cash accounts and references to family matters. He appears to have been his own banker, and he was certainly of a secretive disposition. We read under date October 9, 1693: "In ye garret in a hole under ye fireplace 240 G. (Guineas) in a wooden box." He also hid his money behind the door of the "old labouratory" and "In ye second presse in ye said Laboura," and "Under ye lower shelf in ye kitchen near ye oven." Besides this were: "In two holes of that great furnace running on almost to the oven, two boxes of milled money. May be drawn out with a long crook iron standing behind ye kitchen door." After a similar fashion he buried his models, so that his descendants might not avail themselves of his accomplishment in that particular branch of ceramics. These latter precautions were of little use, for his direct descendants carried on the business up to 1862, when the works passed into the hands of Mr. C. J. C. Bailey.

Dwight died in 1703.

It was not until the closing years of the seventeenth century that stoneware began to be made in Staffordshire. According to Shaw, the body was successively made of: brick-earth and fine sand; can-marl and fine sand; grey coal-measures clay and fine sand; grey clay and ground flint.

All artistic movements, of whatever country, period, or class, exhibit the same order of growth and development, viz. a rapid advance from infancy to full maturity, followed by a period of gradual decline. This was so in the case of the salt-glazed productions of Staffordshire, with the difference that salt-glaze threw out fresh developments or off-shoots in other directions, as, for instance, the addition of colour. In the case of the white ware, the earliest examples are invariably the finest.

The varieties of Staffordshire salt-glazed ware are as follows:

1. Grey or white ware, with ornamental relief, the ornaments of which are either stamped with seals, or made in a separate mould and fixed to the piece by means of slip, the little connecting pieces of the ornament, such as the stems of leaves, etc., being made and applied by hand; or, further, a mould is cut in intaglio, and the clay pressed into the mould.

2. Scratched blue.

3. Cobalt blue glazed ware, which was often ornamented in enamel white, black, or gold.

4. Enamelling in colours, either of the relief ornament, or patterns and subjects traced on the flat surface of the ware, with a black outline, and coloured.

5. Printing, which was usually in either black or red.

6. Graffito, in which the whole body of the ware is covered with slip of a different colour to the body, and the pattern cut through the slip.

GREY SALT-GLAZED COVERED JAR, MOULD, AND WEDGWOOD LEAD-GLAZED CREAM-COLOURED SUGAR-BOX
South Kensington Museum

There are also pieces in which two or more of these various processes appear.

The first-mentioned class, however, is by far the most important and distinctive of Staffordshire salt-glazed wares. One of its most marked characteristics is a certain Oriental or Chinese influence, which influence, indeed, lasted with modifications during the whole of the salt-glazed period. In the British Museum is a double tea-caddy, with figures evidently taken direct from some Chinese model: the background formed by the well-known Chinese fret. In Mrs. W. S. Salting's collection, now exhibited in the Bethnal Green Museum, is a grotesque figure of a man riding upon a rhinoceros, strongly reminiscent of Oriental work. This same influence is apparent both in the shapes of the various pieces, teapots, bottles, etc., and in their ornamentation; both ornament, figures, architectural and other views of an Oriental character being introduced.

This Oriental influence was, however, tempered by an individuality which was quite native. The Staffordshire modellers were not content to be merely imitative, and a style was gradually formed which was to all intents and purposes original.

In some pieces we get the purely native character more strongly marked, as in the cylindrical mug decorated with a subject from Hogarth's "Midnight Conversations," a rare coloured example of which is in the Hanley Museum, and is illustrated at page 180. On either side of the subject-panel are panels with various birds, beasts, and fishes, together with four coats of arms, those of Bertie (three battering-rams), Hales, Leveson-Gower, and Vane. This piece is absolutely unique; the colour quality being totally different to any other piece of salt-glazed work which we have seen.

The teapots assume a great variety of fanciful shapes: a

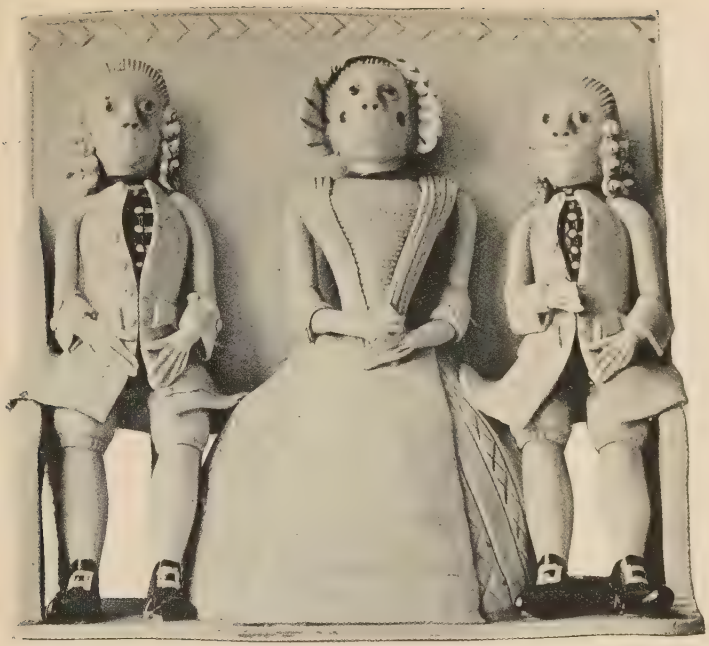
kneeling camel, of which there are several versions; a horse, of which there are also several variations; a ship, an example of which appears in the British Museum collection, and is inscribed, "The vessel that Admiral Vernon was in at taking Portobello, the *Burford*." There are also heart-shaped or lovers' teapots, which were presentations from the faithful swain to his mistress, and there are those teapots which are decorated with purely abstract forms.

The pecten shell was a favourite motif, the form being peculiarly adapted to the method employed—viz. that of cutting in intaglio, the ribs of the shell being formed by a single stroke of the tool. The mould given in the illustration is one of these shell patterns with a row of curious small Greek anthemions and two snails, signed "R. W., 1749"—the initials of Ralph Wood. As a matter of fact, the conditions of material and method were absolutely observed throughout. A convention was adopted which was entirely consistent with the best decorative traditions, and the white salt-glazed ware of Staffordshire will well bear comparison with similar work of any country and period.

The British Museum "pew group" illustrated is one of four known pieces of the kind, all evidently by the same hand. Another example is in the possession of Mr. Solon, engraved in his "Art of the Old English Potter"; and the remaining two are in the museum at Dresden.

The example illustrated opposite differs in several respects from Solon's specimen: first in the character of the figures, which in this instance represent the poorer sort of folk; there are three figures introduced in this, instead of two, as in Solon's specimen; and the only colour introduced is black on the shoes and waistcoats of the men, and in the two patches on the woman's face.

Solon's group is evidently intended to represent people of a



PEW GROUP, SALT-GLAZE
British Museum

PEW GROUP, SALT-GLAZE. HEIGHT 6 INCHES
Collection of Frank Falkner and Dr. Sidebotham

higher station, possibly the squire and his lady. The gentleman appears in laced coat with buttons, and wig; the lady in kirtle, with panniers, stiffened collar and cuffs. The pew is more ornamental and pretentious in shape, the ornament being emphasised by patches of brown, which colour also appears on the flowers of the lady's dress and on the gentleman's buttons and wig.

Solon suggests, with a good deal of probability, that these pieces may have been instances of Thomas Toft trying his hand at modelling, and they certainly exhibit the same quaint naïveté of Toft's figure pieces, allowing, of course, for differences of material. In any case, they are among the very earliest examples of salt-glazing, and are of the highest interest.

There appears, however, still another "pew group" (also illustrated at page 170) in the collection of Mr. Frank Falkner and Dr. Sidebotham, at present on view at Peel Park, Salford. This piece presents several variations on either the British Museum or Mr. Solon's specimen—the addition of the bottle, doubtless to contain sustenance during the sermon, and the three Brobdignagian masks on the back of the seat, together with the general character of the whole. We have meditated deeply upon this "pew group," and we have come to the conclusion that it is *not* by the same hand as the two other specimens, but rather by, we will not say an imitator, but one who has seen, and wished to emulate the merits of the others. We are of opinion that similar ones by this same artist must exist: that the artist has trodden the same path before. The thing is altogether too skilful in certain ways. The lady's arms, and the gentleman's too for that matter, are arrived at by means of a simple roll of clay, pinched at the ends to form the hands, but they are nevertheless singularly expressive. The three Brobdignagians at the back are probably

intended as a piece of humour; or are they celestial spirits (wingless because the artist doubted his own powers in this particular), intended to counteract in some mysterious way those which presumably are contained in the bottle, the artist placing little faith in the eloquence of the preacher? However this may be, the piece is a veritable masterpiece in its way, and represents the extreme high-water mark of the humorously grotesque.*

Scratched or incised blue, which is invariably described by writers as marking a period of decadence in the history of salt-glazing, is a perfectly legitimate system of decorating the ware in the absence of relief work. It can no more be said to be "decadent," *per se*, than mural decoration can be said to mark a decline from sculptured ornament. It possesses qualities of its own, quite distinct from relief, and cannot properly be compared with relief. If the addition of colour be considered an advantage (and surely it is an advantage), and if line work can be said to possess interest, which few, we take it, will deny, scratched blue is a simple, ready, and effective means of obtaining a very satisfactory result. The system has great possibilities, and has been very effectively employed during recent years by Miss Hannah Barlow in her animal subjects on grey Doulton ware, and also by others.

"Scratched blue" consists of the incision by a pointed instrument of patterns on the unbaked "body" or clay, and cobalt glass powder dusted in the incisions by means of a piece of cottonwool, producing an effect similar to tattoo marks on the skin, the blue leaving a soft tint round the lines, thus

* There is of course the possibility that this is not a "pew group" at all, but a social conversation—Mrs. Guffin, the miller's wife, talking scandal to Mr. Gump, the currier, at a party, and the heads rude suggestions of comedy masks.

modifying what would otherwise be a hard and unpleasant effect.

It began to be produced in Staffordshire about 1740, and many examples exist in museums and in private collections. In the Schreiber Collection at South Kensington is a large posset-pot, decorated with a pattern of birds and flowers, a similar pot being engraved in Solon's "Art of the Old English Potter."

In the Hanley Museum is a similar shaped and decorated pot, inscribed M.B. 1745, which is probably the earliest dated piece of scratched blue known. In the same collection is a large mug $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, with a diameter of $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches at the base, having a broad band of elaborate ornament. Both pieces are exceedingly handsome.

There is also in the South Kensington collection a cylindrical mug on which is the following inscription—one of the many indications on the pottery of the period of the great popularity of Frederick the Great:

> This is Thomas Cox'es cup,
> Come my Freind and drink it up;
> Good news is come 'n the Bells do ring,
> And here's a Health to Prussia's King.
> February 16th, 1758.

below are the rose and thistle with a narrow border above. Another mug, similar in shape, but smaller, and evidently by the same maker, is marked "I. H., 1752."

A small mug in the British Museum is inscribed "Wenman and Dashwood," with the apparently mysterious and inconsequent couplet—

> "Old interest for ever
> No double return."

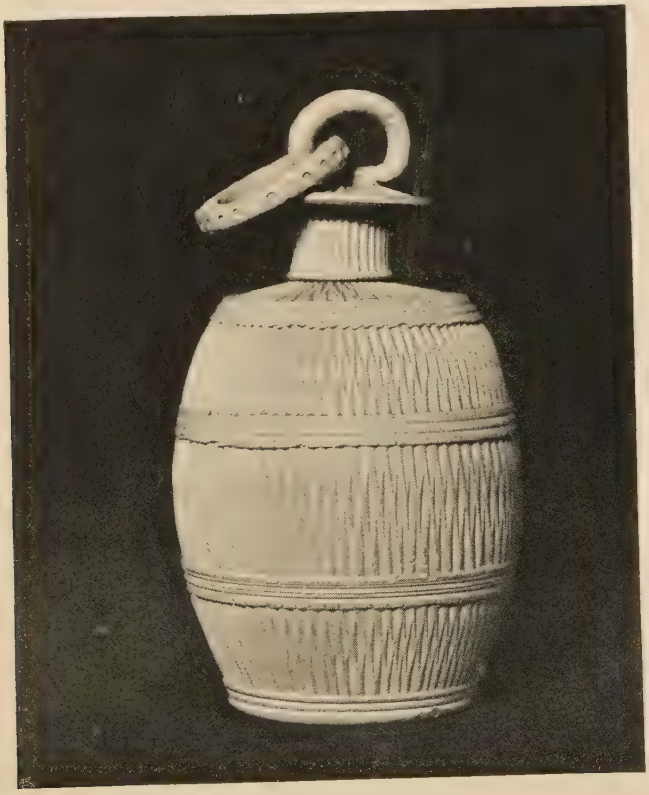
evidently an election mug.

Of the rare examples of cobalt-blue glazed ware, there appears a teapot in the British Museum collection. There is also a milk-jug in the same collection in which the colour is perhaps of a finer quality, the blue being thinner, and the warm colour of the body pleasantly modifying the blue.

This ware was made by W. Littler, of Longton, about the years 1745-50. It was, as previously stated, occasionally enamelled on the top of the blue, in white, black, or gold ; these enamelled pieces being exceedingly rare. There is a coffee-pot at South Kensington rather elaborately ornamented in white.

Littler is an important figure in the history of British ceramics. He was brother-in-law to Aaron Wedgwood, and the son of a potter from whom he inherited a small estate at Brownhills, near Tunstall. He seems, when very young, to have imagined a resemblance between the finer qualities of white salt-glazed Staffordshire stoneware and Oriental porcelain, and he at once set to work to make a porcelain to be glazed by the process then in vogue. It is not known whether he succeeded in making his porcelain while still at Brownhills, but this is very likely the case, as he expended his patrimony, and removed in 1750 to Longton Hall. Accounts are very conflicting. Simeon Shaw says Littler attempted the manufacture of porcelain about 1765 *at Brownhills,* "and he removed to Longton Hall near Lane End (now the residence of Richard Heathcote, Esq., M.P.), where he continued his experiments, until his success surpassed the expectations of his contemporaries ; but there not being much demand for this kind of ware, he sacrificed his estate at Brownhills, near Burslem, and then discontinued making porcelain."

Shaw is certainly incorrect in his dates, for an advertisement of *Longton Hall* porcelain appeared in the Birmingham press as early as 1752, and continued at intervals (in "Aris's Birmingham



VESSEL IN FORM OF A BARREL, SALT-GLAZE.
HEIGHT $8\frac{1}{2}$ INCHES

DOUBLE TEA-CADDY, SCREWED STOPPERS, SALT-GLAZE.
HEIGHT 6 INCHES

Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

Gazette" and "The London Public Advertiser") until 1758, when they ceased, seven years before the date given by Shaw.

Littler is credited with the introduction of two important processes. One is the use of fluid glaze, in which the ware was immersed, instead of being coated or washed by means of a brush or sponge. Whether this fluid glaze contained salt we have no means of ascertaining. Shaw says it was "a mixture of very fusible materials—of certain proportions of ground zaffre with the flint and the clay that composed the body of the pottery: mixed with a determinable quantity of water, and varied for the different kinds of articles."

The expression "very fusible materials," as here employed, is a relative term. As a body it would be extremely fusible, but as a glaze it would be very infusible: in fact, it is not a glaze at all. But it would appear that Littler used this mixture as a sympathetic medium between the actual glaze and the body: the salt vapour being deposited in the usual manner, but softened and mellowed by the preliminary process, appearing, says Shaw, "of a fine glossy surface, free from those minute inequalities observable on all the pottery glazed with salt only." Littler is also credited with having been the first to use oxide of cobalt as a ground for salt-glazed ware. Whether this is the case or no, he was beyond all question the first to apply cobalt for grounds in any quantity. Littler's "body" was a vitreous frit similar to that used at Chelsea before the introduction of bones. William Duesbury, the pioneer of the Derby China Works, was closely connected with Littler, and was probably at one time his partner. Duesbury is known to have resided at Longton Hall in the autumn of 1755, and Jewitt has discovered a deed drawn up in 1756 "between John Heath, of Derby, in the county of Derby, gent.; Andrew Planché, of the same place, china

maker; and William Duesbury, of Longton, enameller." From this deed we gather the fact that John Heath provided the sum of one thousand pounds "to be made and employed between them for ye carrying on of ye said act of making china wares." Littler failed twice, and it seems likely that Duesbury, foreseeing the failure of the Longton venture, and contemplating the establishment of the Derby enterprise, traded with the Longton Hall productions as a means of supply to the Derby business during the time employed in laying down plant and making preparations for manufacture. It is significant that in the deed mentioned, no place of manufacture is stated, yet in December, 1756, there was an auction sale in London, lasting four days, by order of the "Proprietors of the Derby Porcelain Manufactory, of a curious collection of fine figures, jars, sauce-boats, services for desserts, after the finest Dresden models." Some five months after (May, 1757) another advertisement announced the sale of "a large variety of the Derby or second Dresden."

Some authorities quote these advertisements to show that "the partnership between John Heath and William Duesbury cannot have been the commencement of the Derby Works," since the variety of articles advertised "could not possibly have been placed on the market in a year's time."

But there is no evidence of any manufacture of porcelain at Derby before 1756, and there is abundant documentary evidence of Duesbury's connection with Littler up to and after that date. There cannot be any reasonable doubt that the Derby productions were originally made known to the public by the medium of porcelain glazed with salt and manufactured at Longton Hall. From the time of the agreement mentioned, to the dismantling of Longton Hall in 1759, the style of the

business was changed to W. Littler & Co. On the closing of the Longton Hall business, and its transference to Derby, Littler became manager to Messrs. Baddeley and Fletcher, of Shelton. He lived to a very advanced age; but in the latter years of his life he became very infirm, and died in extreme poverty. Duesbury in 1770 purchased the Chelsea factory, and in 1779 he also became the owner of the Bow works. In 1784 the moulds and workmen were removed from these potteries to Derby.

The Longton Hall porcelain cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as either artistic or beautiful. It is founded on a debased style, and does not even exhibit the best characteristics of the style adopted. The pottery is often clumsy, and the colours coarsely applied. But while admitting this, it would be ungrateful to withhold appreciation for Littler's services as a pioneer in the manufacture of porcelain. And it would be unjust to deny that some pieces of "Longton Hall" are fine examples of their class. The large vase in the Victoria and Albert Museum, with the raised flowers, surmounted with the modelled figure of a cock and other poultry, is worthy to rank with the finest examples of Chelsea, which is, equally with Longton Hall, open to the charge of producing pottery of a meretricious type of design—if the word "design" can be rightly applied to this banal ornamentation. One of the most interesting and least objectionable (from a decorative point of view) of the Longton Hall productions is a little teapot in the Hanley Museum. It has the characteristic leaf pattern moulded round the base, and is decorated with an Oriental motif, principally in pink and green. This interesting piece formerly belonged to Enoch Wood, and has the remains of a label in his handwriting affixed. The label states that "This was given to Enoch Wood by William Fletcher in January, 1809. He informs me he

remembers it being made by Mr. William Littler at Longton, near Stoke, about fifty-five years ago, say in the year 1754. It has never been out of his possession during that time, and is highly valued." Examples of Longton Hall ware are scarce in private collections, although many pieces must be scattered about the country in secluded and out-of-the-way places. It is not difficult of identification, as it is the only porcelain glazed with salt, and the peculiar tone of the blue, together with the individual style of modelling, should at once help the expert to determine its identity. Of the site of Littler's factory nothing is definitely known; but it is pretty certain that it was either within the Hall itself, or its immediate precincts. Some writers have gone so far as to doubt the existence of the Hall anterior to Littler's occupation, with the suggestion that John Ward's description of it as a Queen Anne mansion is erroneous.

Mrs. Willoughby Hodgson says, "I have tried in vain to unearth the history of Longton Hall before it became a china factory. The Rev. Stebbing Shaw does not mention the place in his exhaustive 'History of Staffordshire,' published in 1798, and John Ward takes up its history subsequent to Littler's occupation, when it had been purchased by Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Edensor Heathcote. It is described as a Queen Anne mansion, and was situated a mile from the village of Longton. . . . It is significant that Stebbing Shaw does not mention this Queen Anne mansion, and if it had become a house of commerce this would account for the omission. A sidelight (which some may think has no bearing on the case) has suggested to me that Longton Hall, when it came into the possession of the Heathcote family, required considerable renovation, and that it may have been necessary to convert it once more into a dwelling house after serving as a pottery. I refer to those two magnificent

chimney-pieces, each of different design, made by Wedgwood and Flaxman for Sir John Heathcote of Longton Hall. These veritable triumphs of the potter's art were for some years in the South Kensington Museum, but are destined, I fear, to find a permanent resting-place on the other side of the Atlantic. . . . In the days of Sir John Edensor Heathcote people did not amuse themselves by filling up their houses to suit the latest

LONGTON HALL, 1906

fashion, and to my mind it looks as if, finding fireplaces and chimney-pieces damaged or deficient, Sir John gave orders to Wedgwood to supply some of the new ones."

We are inclined to agree with Mrs. Hodgson. She says, however, that the Hall "*was* situated a mile from Longton." It is to-day in excellent preservation, and is, as Ward describes it, undoubtedly a Queen Anne or later Jacobean mansion. It

is said to have been the residence of the Edensors prior to Littler's occupation, and to have become unoccupied owing to a partial decline in the fortunes of the family.

It is quite likely, on the alliance of the Heathcotes with the Edensors, that an opportunity of restoring the state of the old demesne would not be neglected. At any rate, the place is quite interesting enough to be rescued from absolute oblivion, although it is no longer a family seat, but divided into tenements.

Coloured enamelling is of two kinds—the first in which the raised ornament is emphasised by means of colour, as in the mug of "Midnight Conversations" previously referred to; and the second in which the decoration is on the flat surface of the ware. There is an interesting small teapot in the British Museum, with coloured relief ornaments of an Oriental type; the native character is, however, evident in the figure subject, which represents the young Bacchus standing upon a branch of vine with one foot on a cask, holding a cup in his hand. It must be confessed that the figure, although primitive in character, is the most interesting part of the piece. The general effect of the pot is extremely good.

Surface decoration in colour again divides itself into two classes: that in which patterns or subjects are traced invariably with a black outline and filled in with colour, with the natural body as a background; and that in which the enamel covers the whole surface of the piece. In each of these classes the Chinese influence is strongly evident, both in the character of the subject and in the manner of draughtsmanship. Indeed, this freedom of draughtsmanship is so strongly reminiscent of the peculiar touch of the long "fitches" of Chinese and Japanese craftsmen, that it presents one of the most remarkable features of salt-

MUG, "MIDNIGHT CONVERSATIONS" IN RELIEF, WITH COLOURED ENAMELLING
Hanley Museum

glazed ware. We remember M. Arnoux constantly complaining of the inability of English painters and gilders to work with anything like the freedom of the Orientals. We have abundant evidence in the salt-glazed wares that it was done at this period. The mug and jug illustrated from the Glaisher Collection are both perfect examples of enamelled salt-glaze, the former being probably painted by one of the two Dutchmen who are said to have worked at Hot Lane about 1750.

Salt-glaze enamelling was not always satisfactory, however. The colours are occasionally crude. They consist usually of a bright turquoise blue, a turquoise or copper green (several tints), rose colour, yellow, mauve, and an iron red.

In the South Kensington Museum is a large dish in which Frederick the Great again appears as a subject motif. The whole of the centre of the dish (which has a raised basket or trellis border) is occupied by an equestrian portrait of the king, which, together with the inscription, "Fredrik. Willem, Kooning van Prûÿsen," has been added in Holland.

Shaw says, "The benefits accruing from the great demand for the salt-glazed white stonewares caused the inhabitants to tolerate the method of glazing, although for about five hours of each Saturday, fifty or sixty manufactories sent forth dense clouds of vapour that filled the valleys and covered the hills to an extent of several square miles."

These phenomena were occasioned by the methods employed in glazing the ware. Stoneware was chiefly used because a vitreous body is essential to obtain the best results, as the soda is decomposed under the action of the vapours by the silica in the body, thus forming a soda-silicate. The conical-shaped ovens in which the ware was fired had circular holes near the top, below which a wooden platform was erected. On this

platform the men, naked, and swathed in wet cloths to help them to withstand the action of the fumes, stood, and shovelled in the salt when the heat was greatest. The glaze is deposited in minute drops or granulations, giving an effect similar to the surface of the peel of an orange. The glaze is often imperfectly distributed—the soda vapours not always reaching every place in the same proportion, so that one side may be highly glazed, and the other side dry, or nearly so. For a body deficient in silica, red lead was sometimes mixed with the salt, and the added fluidity made the glaze smoother, more even, and less granulous. A salt-glaze factory existed in Burslem up to 1823, and salt-glazed wares are made to-day in East Staffordshire and West Derbyshire, as well as at Messrs. Doulton's Lambeth factory.

Mr. W. Turner, F.R.S., has thrown considerable light on salt-glazed ware. He doubts (a doubt which, as previously stated, we strongly share) that the brothers Elers introduced salt-glazed ware in Staffordshire. He says, tersely enough, "Why such men should go to Bradwell to make pots, where the profits were low, seems unaccountable, unless it was to make money by a superior kind of ware. Crouch ware would not pay them. Red ware did, of that we have evidence: of the other—none."

But Mr. Turner's most valuable contribution to the subject is his account (in "The Connoisseur," January and October, 1905) of his investigations respecting "Crich" wares. Mr. Turner points out that in "The Old English Potter" we are told that the name probably arose from the employment of the white clay of Derbyshire, called "crouch clay," which was used to make the glass pots (crucibles) at Nottingham. Also that the name is found in several unspecified documents. Mr. Turner ransacked books bearing on the geological survey of Derbyshire, and consulted Professor Boyd-Dawkins and other experts, and

MUG AND JUG, SALT-GLAZE, DELICATELY PAINTED IN ENAMEL. MOULDED "SHELL" TEAPOT, COLOURED. HEIGHT $6\frac{3}{8}$, $7\frac{1}{2}$, AND 5 INCHES RESPECTIVELY

Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

could find no such name in the geological records of the clays of Derbyshire. The first man to mention the words "crouch clay" is John Houghton, who wrote in 1692. Houghton spells Dwight's name variously, in one case calling him "Dowoit." Mr. Turner asks, reasonably enough, "Could the word 'crouch' not be a mutation as well?" There was a potworks at Crich, near Matlock. It is mentioned by Jewitt in his history of "The Ceramic Art of Great Britain," but he gives no particulars regarding it. Mr. Turner explored the site, made excavations, and found white and brown salt-glazed ware, salt-glazed saggers, "bobbs" or "cockspurs" salt glazed, pieces of a crucible, etc. He found that the saggers were large, with holes in them three inches across to allow the salt fumes to go through and encircle the objects within. He found in an old deed that Lady Dixie transferred the ground to Thomas Morley, potter, about the middle or end of the seventeenth century.

Another deed mentions Thomas Dodd, potter, bankrupt in 1763. He finds, too, that the name Crich has undergone many mutations:

Crice, in Domesday Book, A.D. 1085.
Crech, in the Harleian MS., A.D. 1195.
Cryche, in an Elizabethan Muster Roll, A.D. 1580.
Creach, in Camden's "Britannica," A.D. 1586.
Cruche, in an Indenture of Feoffment, A.D. 1612.
Critch, in Houghton's "Husbandry, etc." A.D. 1693.
Crich, in Farey's "Survey of Derbyshire," A.D. 1815.

If Houghton could change Dwight into Dowoit, it is quite probable (as Mr. Turner points out) that he could alter "Cruche" or "Critch" into "Crouch." "The inferences are" (says Mr. Turner) "that this old potworks was established in the seventeenth century, and existed about a century; that crucibles were

made of 'Cruche clay,' as at the Nottingham factory; that salt-glazed 'pots' were made there very early . . . that the same clay was sent to Nottingham; and that it was called 'Crouch' clay by Houghton."

This clay was used in Nottingham in 1693. A pottery had existed in Nottingham as early as 1641. Mr. Turner continues: "There is a double-cased posset-pot in the possession of my friend Mr. Cox, of Whalley Range, Lancashire. It is dated 1700, at Nottingham, and has an inscription on it. . . . It is glazed with salt. Can it be supposed for one moment that the Nottingham potters produced this fine specimen for the first time? No! It took years of education to reach that level. If so, the same remark applies to Crich. There is an undoubted Crich posset-pot, dated 1717. . . . The evidence points clearly to the fact that the Nottingham and Derbyshire potters knew all about the salt-glazing long before the close of the seventeenth century. . . . If such was the case with the Derbyshire and Nottingham men, the Staffordshire potters have just as strong a claim."

The particulars of the "Crich" works, together with the numerous illustrations of pieces excavated, form a valuable contribution to the vexed question of the origin of Crouch wares. It is at least certain that the evidence supporting the supposed introduction of salt-glazing by the brothers Elers is from the least reliable authorities—Parkes, Aikin, Houghton, and subsequent writers who have relied on their testimony; while on the other hand the testimony of Plott, Pitt, and Shaw goes to show that it was largely produced in 1690, and could not have been spontaneously made without years of previous experiment and practice.

Investigation discloses the fact that many potteries existed of

which no record has been made. Jewitt and Meteyard both speak of a pipe works in Newcastle, and Plott mentions the manufacture in that town, of tiles for garden edging.

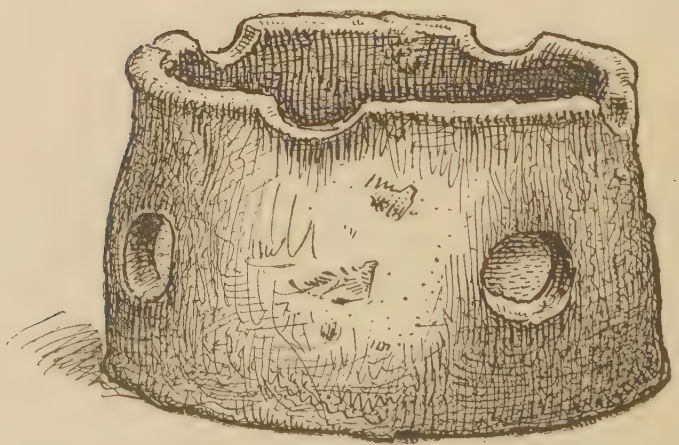
But there were, besides, at least two potteries in Newcastle—perhaps not in Plott's time, although we are inclined to think that potteries then existed in Newcastle.

One was unearthed in Lower Street a few years ago, and a number of pieces of ware found which are now in the Council Chamber. This pottery existed prior to 1760, because the buildings demolished on its site were earlier than that date. But about 1800 Buckley and Bent were potting in Newcastle. They are recorded as earthenware manufacturers in an old directory, of which the fly-leaf and date are missing; but in this directory Wedgwood and Byerley, Thomas Wolfe, William and John Turner, and others help to pretty accurately fix the date, as Byerley joined Wedgwood in 1790, and the Turners gave up business in 1803. Many fragments of salt-glaze of an interesting and varied description have been found in Newcastle, besides numerous fragments of slip-decorated ware.

In the above-mentioned directory, Keeling and Co. are described as potting in Stoke Lane, which is also in the Borough of Newcastle. This may have been on the Hartshill road, between Stoke and Newcastle, as there still stands the ruins of an old oven, which formed part of an old pottery—although not working within the memory of living persons. In Parson and Bradshaw's directory, 1818, William Bellamy, Fletcher Street, Newcastle, is described as a pipe maker. This is not near the site of Rigg's old pottery, which was then rated to the parish, and consequently working; so Bellamy may have been a workman. Samuel Bagshaw is described both as a pipe maker and as a water-pipe maker, at Basford, where within our memory

there was not a single house besides Basford Hall and the Rock House; but there were scattered foundations of what might have been a pottery in King's fields, with the remains of low arches as of oven or kiln "mouths."

In the same directory (1818) T. and H. Moss and Benjamin Myatt are described as potting at Red Street. Shaw mentions the Moss family as potting at Red Street in the early part of the eighteenth century. There were potteries in the Honeywall —probably Josiah Rowley—and at Penkhull. In one of these directories the list of potters is headed "Stoke-Penkhull," etc., but the individual potters are not located. About 1800 a Samuel Spode was making salt-glaze at the Foley, then spelt "Folly."



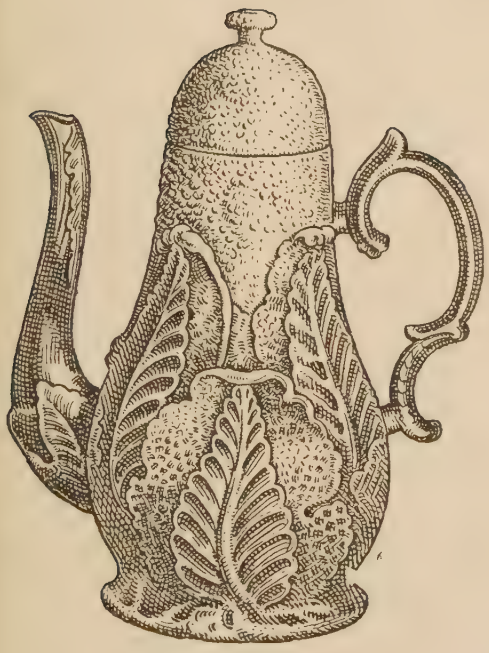
SALT-GLAZE SAGGER, FOUND BUILT IN AN OLD WALL NEAR HANLEY.
BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM

CHAPTER XV

THOMAS WHIELDON

He did not overlay them, superimpose
The new upon the old and blot it out,
But laid them on a level in his work.

BROWNING ("Cleon").



CAULIFLOWER COFFEE-POT.
BURSLEM MUSEUM

"FOR the post of honour no name could enter into competition with that of Thomas Whieldon, who, between 1740 and 1780, improved the older processes, and wrought with them new kinds of ware." Thus writes Mr. William Burton, rendering to Whieldon no more than justice. The fact that Whieldon had the advantage of able assistants is unquestioned. It is one of the evidences of a skilful potter that he provides himself with adequate assistants, and fully avails himself of their talents. Such combinations cannot be one-sided. The fame of Wedgwood is not dimmed by his

employment of Flaxman and others whose names are recorded in a long list of contributors to their employer's reputation and fortune. Moreover, the association of Flaxman and his fellows, with Wedgwood, was no less to their own advantage than to that of Wedgwood. Certainly Wedgwood was of assistance to Whieldon. So, no doubt, were Spode, Garner, Barker, and Greatbatch, his other apprentices. There is no record of the date when Whieldon commenced to make pottery, but it was some time prior to 1740. At the outset, his little works at Fenton Low consisted of two or three straw-thatched cottages or sheds, and some idea of the modesty of the business may be gathered from the fact that he walked from town to town soliciting orders, with his samples strapped in a pack on his back. Geographically his works was in Fenton, for it lay on the Fenton side of the Trent, which forms the boundary between that township and Stoke. But the factory was within bowshot of Stoke Church.

In 1742 Whieldon, according to some authorities, took Josiah Wedgwood into his works, Josiah being then twelve years old.*

* Nearly all authorities differ as to Wedgwood's working period anterior to the date of his apprenticeship to his brother Thomas. After careful comparison of existing evidence, and of documents put in our possession by the Adams family, we have come to the conclusion that the most correct arrangement of dates is as follows:

Josiah Wedgwood, born	1730		
Father died, and Josiah started to work for his brother	1739	9	years of age
Had small-pox—illness of nearly twelve months	1741	11	„ „
Delicate, and worked intermittently—apprenticed	1744	14	„ „
Completed apprenticeship	1749	19	„ „
Worked as journeyman for his brother to	1751	21	„ „
Started potting, Cliff Bank—capital £20	1751	21	„ „
Continued with Alders & Harrison—end of	1752	22	„ „

The deed of Wedgwood's partnership with Whieldon (at Fenton) is dated 1754. The partnership continued to 1759.

We afterwards find Wedgwood completing an apparently uneventful apprenticeship of five years to his brother, then potting in Burslem. His brother declined to admit Josiah into partnership, owing to his "flights of fancy," so he served two years as journeyman at a very small wage. At twenty-one he received a small legacy of £20 left to him by his father, and with this insignificant sum he entered into partnership with one John Harrison (a descendant of the family of Major-General Harrison, the "regicide"), at Cliff Bank, Stoke. Harrison, who was a tradesman carrying on business at Newcastle-under-Lyme, provided the necessary capital for the pottery, while Wedgwood supplied the technical knowledge. The connection was of short duration. Harrison appears to have claimed an unfair share of the profits, and the partnership was dissolved. Harrison seceded from the concern, and Whieldon took his place, and for five years, from 1754 to 1759, Wedgwood was Whieldon's junior partner.

Josiah Spode was apprenticed to the firm of Whieldon and Wedgwood. As apprentice he was paid at the rate of half a crown a week, and when he became a journeyman his wages were raised to the munificent sum of seven shillings weekly. The wages generally were on a similar scale. Turners, throwers, and firemen were paid eight shillings a week, and other operatives on a similar footing.

Whieldon appears to have surrounded himself with the best available skill. He employed as modeller Aaron Wood, who had been apprenticed to Dr. Thos. Wedgwood in 1731. Wood was a modeller whose work was eagerly competed for by rival manufacturers, and it is a proof of Whieldon's foresight that he succeeded in securing a share of his services. Wood, no doubt, modelled many of the dainty pieces of Whieldon ware which

are familiar to us. During the term of Wedgwood's partnership, Whieldon's business increased considerably, for in 1749 he made large additions to his works, and greatly increased the scope of his operations.

During Wedgwood's partnership with Harrison he appears to have worked very much on Whieldon's lines, for he made at Cliff Bank a number of knife-handles in mottled glazes, agate, tortoiseshell, and similar decorations, to be sold to the Birmingham and Sheffield metal-mounters. Indeed, we have it on record that after his entry into partnership with Whieldon, the young Josiah made occasional visits to Birmingham to effect sales. While he was still apprenticed, Whieldon did a substantial business in snuff-boxes. Miss Meteyard speaks in terms of admiration of these boxes, which she describes in detail. They appear to be very different to Whieldon's productions as generally known. They were made of a white body, with delicately enamelled flowers in blue, red, and yellow, and foliage in soft dull greens. These were sold by the gross to the Birmingham manufacturers, who mounted them in metal and retailed them to their customers, exactly as lamps, biscuit-boxes, cruets, and other table wares are to-day. But during the period of Wedgwood's partnership there can be no doubt that many developments were effected. We have very slight documentary evidence; but among the few MSS. extant, there is a green pocket-book in Wedgwood's hand-writing, containing orders for the years 1752 and 1753. Among these are "Blue flowered cups and saucers; plates and image toys; ash-colour, cream-colour, and tortoiseshell teapots." In the same book is a list of debts due to the firm in London, dated April 9th, 1753, amounting to £291 12*s.* 7*d.*

There is also a set of balance sheets for the year 1757

WHIELDON WARE: AGATE TEAPOT (HEIGHT $4\frac{1}{2}$ INCHES) AND DOUBLE TEA-CADDY, TORTOISESHELL (HEIGHT $6\frac{1}{2}$ INCHES)
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

which give profits on certain goods. January, profits £3 16*s.* 7*d.*; May, over £28; October, over £36. These figures only refer to one particular portion of the firm's productions, and show a large and steady increase. The inference from the above is that each particular class of goods was recorded separately, in order to ascertain the exact degree of commercial success. This would only be in accordance with what we know of Wedgwood's methodical and business-like habits in later years.

Among the Wedgwood MSS. are rough memoranda of experiments, some in his own handwriting; and others, more carefully recorded, neatly copied by Mr. Chisholm.

The first volume commences—"This suite of experiments was begun at Fenton Hall, in the parish of Stoke-on-Trent, about the beginning of the year 1759, in my partnership with Mr. Whieldon, for the improvement of, and manufacture of earthenware, which at that time stood in great need of it: the demand for our goods decreasing daily, and the trade being universally complained of as being bad and in a declining condition.

"White stoneware (*viz.* with salt-glaze) was the principal article of our manufacture, and the prices were now reduced so low that the potters could not afford to bestow much expense upon it. . . .

"The next article in consequence to stoneware was an imitation of tortoiseshell, but as no improvement had been made in this branch for several years, the consumer had grown nearly tired of it; and though the price had been lowered from time to time in order to increase the sale, the expedient did not answer, and something new was wanted to give a little spurt to the business."

It may be assumed from the above that neither Wedgwood

nor Whieldon were the originators of tortoiseshell, although we know that they improved and developed it very considerably. Wedgwood continues: "I had already made an imitation of agate, which was esteemed beautiful, and made a considerable improvement, but people were surfeited with wares of these various colours. These considerations induced me to try for some more solid improvement, as well in the body as the glazes, the colours, and the forms of the articles of our manufacture. I saw the field was spacious, and the soil so good as to promise ample recompense to any one who should labour diligently in its cultivation."

Here he goes on to explain a kind of cypher which he employed partly to conceal his recipes from any one who should accidentally obtain access to his book, and partly for convenience.

"In the following experiments I have expressed the materials in *numbers*, which in this instance are a species of shorthand, and save much writing."

Then follows the key to the cypher. There are a number of experiments recorded, which testify to the industry and assiduity of Wedgwood, but at the same time prove pretty conclusively that he initiated no development of prime importance in Whieldon's business; his value as a working partner, however, is always apparent. He was never satisfied with things as they were. He spared no pains to improve the durability of the bodies and glazes, the quality and finish of the potting, the blending of the "mottles," and the tone of the colours. His recorded experiments show all this. But they do not show (as one writer suggests) that much of Whieldon's reputation may be due to the "skill of his assistants." The evidence rather points to Whieldon's ability as a trainer and teacher. We must not forget that the foundations of his success were laid, and

the style of his productions determined, during the period of Wedgwood's apprenticeship and the five years occupied in working for his brother and in partnership with Harrison. The great increase in Whieldon's productive capacity, and the corresponding enlargement of his premises, were made in the year 1749, when he took Wedgwood into partnership. Whieldon was potting at least forty years, and Wedgwood's effective co-operation could only have lasted seven years at the outside—*i.e.* the supposed term of his partnership, which is variously stated to have begun in 1752, 1753, and 1754. All authorities, however, agree that it terminated in 1759, after which Thomas Whieldon continued potting for twenty-one years. His productions may be classified under five heads:

1. Black glazed tea, coffee, and chocolate pots.
2. "Image toys" and chimney ornaments.
3. Solid agate.
4. Marbled, mottled, and tortoiseshell wares.
5. Cauliflower, pineapple, maize, etc.

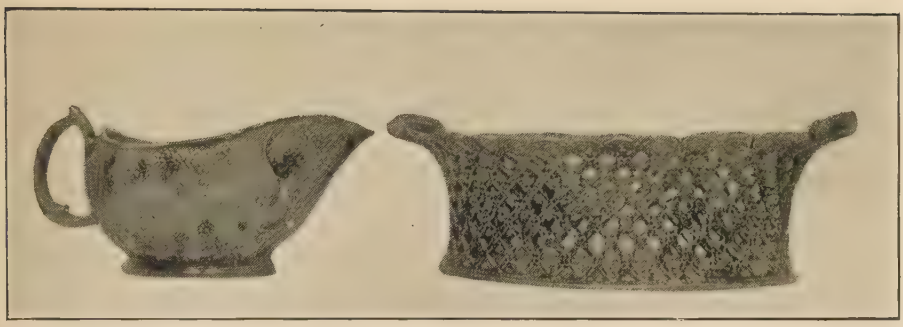
Black glazed specimens of Whieldon are unfortunately rare, and, moreover, extremely difficult of identification. He never put any definite mark on his wares; but this, in the case of his more characteristic productions, matters little, for they are (as Ruskin said of the unsigned Velasquez) "signed in every inch." The curious little figures with yellow heads, mottled bodies, and reddish plinths were doubtless made in Whieldon's early period, and are now very rare.

The "solid agate" was probably the result of Wedgwood's experiments. It differed from the earlier method of applying differently coloured clots of clay on the surface, and dragging them together until the darker clays formed a kind of veining among the lighter ones. The "solid agate" was made by

beating out thin layers of clay of different colours and placing them on top of each other. The whole mass was then doubled over, or rolled up, according to the effect the potter desired. It was then cut crosswise with a wire, and the effect in section was similar to a slice of "roly-poly" pudding made by a pastry-cook. If broad veining was required, the clay was used in the state described above, the irregular curves being given by the convolutions of the clay in thrown ware. But if finer veining was needed, or if the ware had to be "pressed" in moulds, the mass of clay was doubled over and cut by the wire several times. The more doublings, the finer the pattern; and variations in the style of marbling were obtained by cutting the mass obliquely. The local term for this process is "scrōdling," and the productions are called "scrodledy ware."

All Whieldon wares are comparatively rare, and the London museums are not well represented. Fine specimens are scattered about in various private collections, but a magnificent collection of agate, tortoiseshell, and other wares was unfortunately destroyed in the great fire at Muswell Hill in 1873. The commonest examples seem to be the knife and fork hafts, which Whieldon made in large quantities.

There is a good agate teapot in the South Kensington Museum, and other good pieces are in the collections of Messrs. Willett, and Solon, and the Burslem and Hanley Museums. Some of these pieces are glazed yellow, while others are dipped in a glaze which is artificially whitened by the process known as "blueing," which consists of putting in the glaze a very small quantity of cobalt to kill the yellowish tone given by the lead. Many attempts have been made to emulate the mottled and tortoiseshell wares of Whieldon; but no one has succeeded in rivalling the rich, soft combinations achieved by him. This



SAUCE-BOAT MOTTLED PIERCED BASKET

SOLID AGATE JUG, BROAD VEINING SOLID AGATE TEAPOT, FINE VEINING

PINEAPPLE TEAPOT CAULIFLOWER TEAPOT

WHIELDON WARE

Burslem Museum

is due in part to the peculiar quality of his magnificent browns and copper greens, as well as to the discretion employed in the distribution, and the quantity of each particular colour. In some of the pieces, tiny splashes of cobalt are employed with great effect; but this cobalt—besides being sparingly used—has a suavity of tone which is possibly due to the admixture of a little borate of copper.

The manufacture of cloudy and mottled glazes was not confined to Whieldon. Ralph Wood, of Burslem, Thomas Alders and Daniel Bird, of Cliff Bank, are known to have made quantities of these wares, but they are vastly inferior to known Whieldon pieces, both in quality and distribution of colour. An authentic piece is a jug given by Whieldon to his milkman, bearing his name, Ralph Hammersley, and the date, 1757. It has a rustic, or crabstock handle, which was commonly used in Whieldon's time. It is ornamented with conventional flowers and leaves in relief touched with patches of green, grey, and deeper yellow than the body of the jug, which is covered with a yellowish glaze. But his most triumphant achievements, and those most highly prized by collectors, are the perforated double teapots and the mottled octagonal and hexagonal plates. The perforated teapots had an inner casing to contain the tea, and an outer shell, elaborately perforated, enclosing the inner casing—an imitation of an Oriental device. The mottling on these teapots is invariably fine, as also on the hexagonal and octagonal plates. The plates and dishes are flat, with broad, horizontal rims bordered by raised strips with transverse grooves. These are mottled in a velvety blackish brown, inclining to purple, "throbbing," as Mr. Frank Freeth puts it, over a great portion of the surface, and varied with small patches of green, cobalt, and maize colour. A few of these

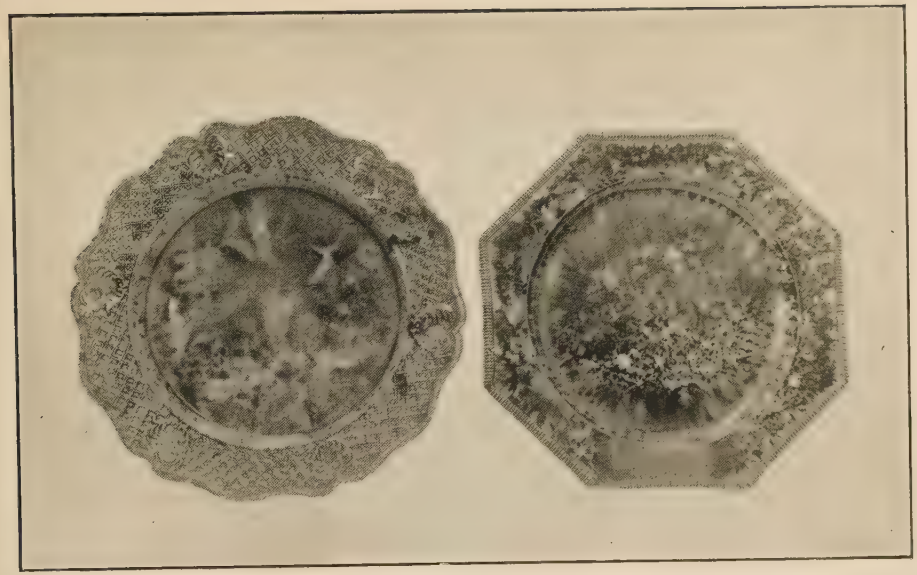
plates and dishes exist in private collections, but no London museum possesses a specimen.

Inferior pieces, mechanically mottled, are fairly common, and are supposed to belong to a later period of Whieldon's manufacture, but it is doubtful whether they are Whieldon's make at all. Some of these later plates have on the rim six embossed panels, alternately showing an inscription, "Success to the . . . King of Prussia . . . and his forces," and between each division an ornamental motive, with an eagle, a bust (presumably a portrait of Frederick), and a trophy. These are superimposed upon trelliswork divided by a kind of scroll of rococo type, a pattern common among the salt-glazed plates of the period. These plates are interesting, but cannot be compared to the fine Whieldon plates. The teapots and tall coffee or chocolate pots, with embossed vine and tendril decorations, and covered with tortoiseshell glaze, are to be seen in various museums and private collections.

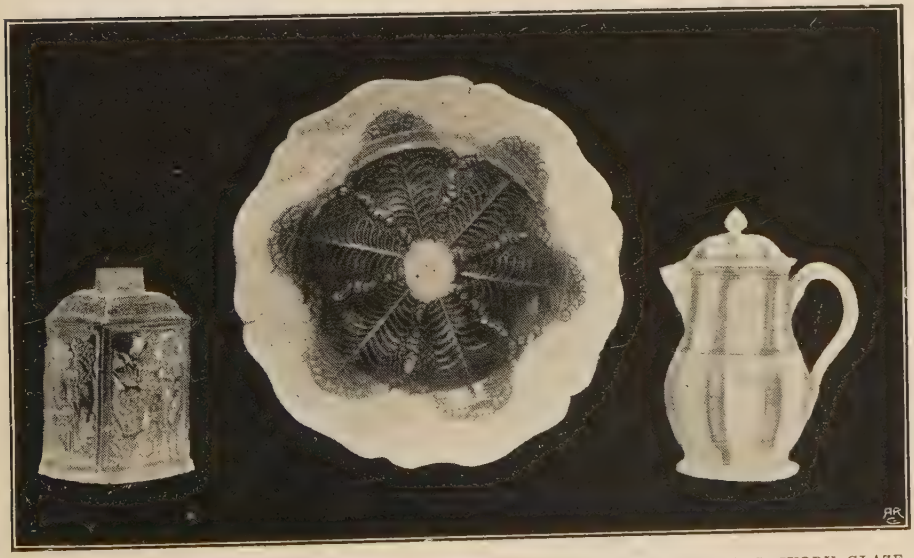
The "cauliflower" types have generally been attributed to Whieldon, and he probably made examples of the pineapple, maize, cauliflower, and melon. Many imitations and reproductions of these wares have been, and are still being, manufactured, but the quality of modelling in the Whieldon specimens is not attained, and the peculiar tone of green on the leaves is unapproached.

This green is in all respects similar to that which Wedgwood applied to his dessert plates and dishes, embossed with vine-leaves and similar motives. It is not unlikely that this green (a formula of which exists among Wedgwood's notes) was produced during the period of his partnership with Whieldon.

Mr. A. Caddie, the Curator of the Stoke Museum, has



TORTOISESHELL PLATES



MOTTLED TEA-CADDY

CAULIFLOWER PLATE
Burslem Museum

JUG, GREEN AND IVORY GLAZE

contributed an interesting article to the "Burlington," with the idea of showing that the cauliflower ware was made by Wedgwood, and not by Whieldon. The chances are that it was made by both, as well as the other varieties.* There can be little doubt that Wedgwood made it after leaving Whieldon, for Messrs. Wedgwood have now, at Etruria, a set of moulds of the cauliflower ware. It was the most successful, commercially as well as artistically, of the series. The creamy tint of the upper part contrasted pleasantly with the rich green of the leaves, while the necessary conventions employed in the modelling of the plant, both emphasised the natural characteristics, and made for the formation of an ornamental motif of no mean order.

Certainly Whieldon must be classed among the greater English potters. He took up three limited types left by Astbury, and widened their range. He improved the potter's processes, and extended their possibilities. He developed the potter's palette and sowed the seeds of ideas which were afterwards matured by Wedgwood and Spode, besides attaining a technical excellence which had its effect on his contemporaries by convincing them that "scamped" work (although it may have enabled them to sell cheaper) did not lead to extended commercial success.

Like the Elerses, Whieldon was jealous of his productions, and, like them, he is reported to have buried his broken pieces to minimise the opportunities of imitation by his competitors. Unlike them, he made a large fortune, and retired from business in 1780. He built a handsome house near Stoke, where he

* Jewitt writes (1865) as having in his possession a small cauliflower jug, which passed into his hands from "the present aged descendant of Uriah Sutton,' mentioned more than once in the hiring-books of Whieldon.

lived many years, honoured and respected for his upright character and his benevolent disposition.

His name has been variously spelt—as Wheeldon, Wheildon, Whealdon, and Whieldon; but the latter seems to be generally accepted as the correct form. He held several public offices, and was High Sheriff of the County of Staffordshire for the year 1768. He died at an advanced age in 1798.

A PORTION OF WEDGWOOD'S WORKS, ETRURIA. POND VIEW

CHAPTER XVI

WHAT WEDGWOOD DID

THE pen-line illustration on page 201 figures a green-glazed puzzle jug from the South Kensington collection, bearing the incised inscription "John Wedgwood 1691." It is the ordinary puzzle jug of the period, of no special originality, or even artistic interest, and would scarcely seem to warrant any distinction or emphasis in the way of signature; as a matter of fact there are two other green-glazed puzzle jugs in the same case, of greater interest artistically; one is dated 1601, and the other of an even earlier date, 1571.* But it is fortunate that this particular

* 1571 is the earliest date which appears on any piece of pottery of undoubted English make. The fine puzzle jug given at page 76 is from the Glaisher Collection; it is 10½ inches high, or about twice the height of the one at South Kensington. A fine example also appears in the Solon Collection.

Wedgwood possessed sufficient vanity to sign his work, as this piece is the earliest known production of the long line of Wedgwoods, potters, whose chief triumphs were achieved in the person of the great Josiah, the only Wedgwood of that Christian name.

The John Wedgwood above mentioned, the great-uncle of Josiah, was, however, not the first potter of the family, as his grandfather, Gilbert Wedgwood, was working in Burslem early in the seventeenth century. Miss Meteyard mentions a John Wedgwood who resided at Dunwood, near Leek, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, and who, by marriage with the heiress of John Shaw of Harracles, acquired considerable property in that district.

The Gilbert Wedgwood above referred to married a Margaret Burslem about the year 1612.

Thomas Wedgwood, the son of Gilbert Wedgwood, was the owner of the greater part of Burslem, including several potworks. He died in 1679, and his son, Dr. Thomas Wedgwood, became the principal potter in the town, making several kinds of ware, including salt-glaze and agate of excellent quality. He worked both the "Churchyard" and "Overhouse" potteries, and to him was apprenticed the prince of block-cutters, Aaron Wood, father of the William Wood who made the models for the useful articles at Etruria, and who asked Byerley to double his wages because he owed £10 or £12 for malt, and "could not do without malt liquor in the house." It is gratifying to know that he got his increase of salary, and his "malt liquor."

In 1740 Thomas and John Wedgwood, sons of Aaron Wedgwood, established themselves as potters in Burslem. They made exhaustive experiments in the properties and qualities of clays, which were a benefit to the whole district. Both were

working potters: one was a thrower, and the other a skilful fireman, and they devoted themselves principally to the manufacture of white stoneware. At one period they met with considerable loss (which almost determined them to discontinue their business) through using a water impregnated with saline particles for the purpose of levigating their clays. They were mystified at their losses through the easy heat at which their ware vitrified, and by trying their wares in another manufacturer's oven, and his in their oven, they found their ware would not bear the heat required to vitrify other potters' wares. Investigation showed that the saline water rendered their wares very fusible, and by changing the water they proceeded to pot with safety. This trivial discovery probably influenced the destiny of Josiah, for had his father (Thomas Wedgwood) and his uncle decided to abandon the business, Josiah's talents might have been diverted to some other profession.

GREEN-GLAZED PUZZLE JUG, INSCRIBED "JOHN WEDGWOOD 1691." SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

Josiah Wedgwood, then, was the youngest of the large family of Thomas and Mary Wedgwood, and was born at Burslem in 1730. His school education terminated at the age of nine, being before the era of school boards and compulsory education. An attack of the small-pox in its most virulent form, three years afterwards, left him for some years a weakling, and an affection of the right knee, resultant upon that disease, ultimately

necessitated the amputation of the limb. Upon his complete recovery from the small-pox (his knee, however, giving him trouble from time to time) he was apprenticed, in 1744, when he was a little more than fourteen years old, to his brother Thomas Wedgwood for the term of five years.*

Miss Meteyard gives the terms of the indenture. We prefer, in lieu of quoting this, to give the indenture, preserved in the Burslem Museum, of one of Wedgwood's own apprentices:

COPY OF INDENTURE OF APPRENTICESHIP IN BURSLEM MUSEUM.

This indenture witnesseth that Thomas Steel, Son of Daniel Steel of Etruria, in the county of Stafford, with his father's consent doth put himself apprentice with Josiah Wedgwood of the same place, potter, to learn his art and with him (after the manner of an apprentice) to serve from the eleventh day of November 1787 until the full end and term of four years from thence and next following, to be fully compleat and ended.

During which term the said apprentice his master faithfully shall serve, his secrets keep, his lawful commands everywhere gladly do. He shall do no damage to his said master, nor see to be done of others, but to his power shall let or forthwith give warning to his said master of the same. He shall not waste the goods of his said master nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not commit fornication, nor contract matrimony within the said term. He shall not play at cards, dice, Tables or any other unlawfull games whereby his said master may have any loss with his own goods or others during the same term without licence of his said master. He shall neither buy nor sell, he shall not haunt Taverns or Play houses nor absent himself from his said master's service day or night unlawfully but in all things as a faithfull apprentice be. And the said Josiah Wedgwood in consideration of the service of his said apprentice in the art of painting what he doth by the best way he can, shall teach and instruct or cause

* The usual term of this exceedingly unsatisfactory and one-sided system, was seven years. Miss Meteyard surmises that Wedgwood gave a prior amount of service equivalent to two years (presumably to Whieldon). The indenture given here is, it will be noticed, for the term of *four* years. The present writer served *seven and a half* years, being bound apprentice at the age of thirteen and a half, and compelled, nevertheless, to serve until the age of twenty-one.

STATUE OF WEDGWOOD. MODELLED BY ROWLAND MORRIS FOR THE FAÇADE OF THE WEDGWOOD INSTITUTE, BURSLEM

to be taught and instructed, the said Josiah Wedgwood finding with the said apprentice 2*s.* 6*d.* per week first year, 2*s.* 9*d.* per week second year, 3*s.* the third year, and 3*s.* 6*d.* the fourth.

Signed DANIEL STEEL
THOMAS STEEL
witnessed by THOMAS BOURNE
and PETER SWIFT.
and by the aforesaid JOSIAH WEDGWOOD *in the presence of* ALEXANDER CHISHOLM
and GEO. JONES.

The two indentures are to all intents and purposes similar, so far as the obligations of the apprentice are concerned. The obligations of the "Master," however, differ materially in the two instances, as instead of the "Meat, Drink, Washing, and Lodging and Apparell of all kinds, both Linen and Woollen and all other Necessaries" given by Thomas Wedgwood to his brother during the term of apprenticeship, Thomas Steel receives 2*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 9*d.*, 3*s.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* weekly for the four years respectively; but Thomas Steel has, as a set off, the inestimable advantage, the value of which only those who have served are able to realise, of serving *one year less.*

The above amounts are a little in advance of those received by apprentices at the period of the present writer's apprenticeship; the wages then commenced at 2*s.* weekly, being increased yearly in similar ratio to the above. Apprentices might, however, and usually did "earn their wages," as it was called; that is, by doing an inferior and purely mercantile class of work, requiring no instruction, or practically none, they could earn ten or fifteen shillings weekly, or more, according to the year of their apprenticeship. At this period (we are now referring to Minton's) the master of the Stoke School of Art (now dead) attended one morning weekly for the purpose of giving instruction to the apprentices; but this gentleman possessed no technical knowledge,

and was not endowed with sufficient artistic power to enable him to exercise any real influence. As a matter of fact the teaching was an absurdity, but it was an evidence, at any rate, of a desire on the part of Messrs. Minton to fulfil their obligations. Later the rate of wages was raised, on account of a great falling off in the number of apprentices, which dwindled from about twenty-five (boys) to five or six, or possibly less.

The apprenticeship system has practically died out in the Potteries. Serious attempts are now being made to revive it, not only with respect to pottery, but to other trades throughout the country.

In an amusing passage in Miss Meteyard's "Life," the author refers to the clauses in the indenture respecting cards, dice, taverns, fornication, and matrimony, as showing "distinctly that most worthy influences were in operation round the boy. His after life proves this," etc., etc. These clauses, however, are the stereotyped thing in an indenture, which is never even read by the boy, or, if mechanically gone through as a matter of form, is forgotten as soon as read; all that the boy is expected to do, is to append his signature to the document, which he does, in a half-frightened way; besides, who is to see that these things are carried out? In the case of Wedgwood, it is true, he lived in his brother's house; and in all cases, the domestic influences would be more likely to affect the character of a young man, than any testamentary restrictions.

The original indenture of Wedgwood's apprenticeship is preserved in the Hanley Museum, and is signed by his eldest brother and his two uncles, Samuel and Abner Wedgwood.

Wedgwood was apprenticed as a "thrower," but owing to his affection of the knee it became necessary for him to forsake the potter's wheel and turn his attention to other branches of the potter's business.

His partnership with Harrison, following immediately upon the close of his apprenticeship, and his subsequent relations with Whieldon, have been sufficiently dealt with in a previous chapter of this work.

In the early part of 1759 Wedgwood commenced business on his own account at the Ivy House Works at Burslem, premises belonging to his cousins John and Thomas Wedgwood of the Big House, and from this time onward his career was one of gradual but sure progress. In the space of seven years (he had also occupied the Brick House Works at Burslem, the site of the present Wedgwood Institute), his business had so far prospered as to warrant his making overtures to Mr. Thomas Bentley, a Liverpool merchant of artistic tastes and exceptional ability, with the view of entering into partnership, an arrangement which was finally agreed upon in the spring of 1767, and lasted until Bentley's death in 1780.

During his partnership with Bentley, in fact almost at the outset, he founded the village and works of "Etruria," an illustration of a portion of which, the pond view, forms the heading of this chapter (the main body of the works, which possesses some claim to architectural interest, is not shown in the cut); the works being occupied in 1769, and the palatial residence which he had been building on the opposite side of the canal, facing the works, in the following year.

The ware with which the name of Wedgwood is most commonly identified, and which has obtained a popularity all over the world, is his Jasper. The term is somewhat confusing—it was first applied to a crystalline terra-cotta body in imitation of jasper, agate, and other stones, the later jasper being a white body of great density, of which sulphate of baryta formed the largest part.

Jasper, besides being of various colours, was of two distinct kinds, *viz.* that in which the colouring matter was incorporated with the body, in other words coloured throughout; and that in which the ware was merely *dipped* in the particular colour required.

With the latter process Wedgwood at first experienced considerable difficulty in preventing the colours of the ground staining, during fixing, the white reliefs or ornamental portions of the pieces. In an interesting letter to Bentley dated January 15, 1775, and given in Miss Meteyard's "Life," he describes the steps by which these difficulties were surmounted. He says in the course of the letter: "By the proof in D, you'l perceive that this quality of staining does not affect the larger heads, or masses of the white, but the ground of this head being much too easy fired, I will not answer for it when the ground is bro't up to its proper heat, and degree of vitrification; only this I may assert, that the thinner the white relief is, the more liable it will be to be stained."

This is only what we might naturally expect, and, moreover, if the staining could be counted upon to behave in a regular and even manner, it would not be so much of a disadvantage, as one of the principal defects of Wedgwood jasper is its lack of transparency in the thinner parts, or of *melting* into the ground. This melting tendency is one of the chief charms of fine relief sculpture, which, however, has not, usually, a different coloured ground to contend with. Indeed, it is also one of the principal charms of the Barberini Vase. No doubt something of this transparency was obtained in the Portland copy and in other fine pieces, by careful subsequent work with the tool, but the greater portion of Wedgwood jasper suffers from the lack of this valuable quality.

WEDGWOOD VASE, WITH PEDESTAL, "APOTHEOSIS OF HOMER." BLACK GROUND, WHITE RELIEFS. HEIGHT 24½ INCHES

PIGEON-COTE. EARTHENWARE, COLOURED. HEIGHT 14 INCHES

This is the *artist's* point of view; it was certainly Flaxman's, who understood low relief as well as any man ever did. No doubt the particular process presented almost insuperable difficulties in the realisation of this quality; Wedgwood himself was keenly alive to this. In a letter to Bentley of July 9, 1776, quoted by Miss Meteyard—Flaxman had been modelling some allegorical figures of "Plenty," etc., and had made some parts of his relief too low—Wedgwood explains that in mercantile work such subtleties are impossible of realisation, and they must be content with simpler effects; he admits that in those parts of draperies and other accessories which are required to be thrown back, the staining might be an advantage, but in the nude figure he affirms that it is generally injurious: "see the poor Queen's nose, and many other cameos."

Wedgwood's jasper includes: vases, in great number and variety; tea and coffee services; cameo and intaglio portraits and medallions; bas-reliefs, plaques, etc., either for purposes of framing, or for insertion into furniture, or mantelpieces; and a large number of miscellaneous smaller articles, such as ear-rings, bracelets, chessmen, buttons, bell-pulls, opera glasses, seals, and many others too numerous to mention.

The different colours of Wedgwood jasper are: blue, of various shades and tints, the darker hues being on the whole the most pleasing; lilac, pink, sage-green, olive-green, yellow, and black.

The solid jasper above mentioned is invariably blue; indeed, after the perfecting of Wedgwood's invention of jasper dip, the making of solid jasper was of rare occurrence, as the latter process was more costly, and did not produce any better result than the jasper dip. As a general rule, therefore, the pieces in solid jasper are the earlier pieces, produced during Wedgwood's

partnership with Bentley, who died in 1780, and which were stamped "Wedgwood and Bentley."

Among the more important of Wedgwood's works in jasper may be mentioned the so-called "Pegasus" vase, representing the "Apotheosis of Homer," modelled by Flaxman from a Greek vase in the British Museum. A copy of this vase was presented by Wedgwood to the British Museum in 1786. It may therefore be reasonably inferred that Wedgwood considered this one of his most successful works. Indeed he expresses as much in a letter to Bentley. The ground is blue, the reliefs being in white.

The figure of Pegasus appears as surmounting the covers of other vases, notably the pair in the collection of Lord Tweedmouth, representing Apollo and the Muses, the ground of these vases being granulated for the purpose of emphasising the difference between it and the figure-work. The colour is pale blue. An example of this design also appears in the South Kensington Collection.

There can be no possible doubt that the most distinctive examples of Wedgwood jasper are those modelled by Flaxman, in which he relied upon his own individuality rather than merely reproducing antique motives. Flaxman's individuality was so marked, and of such a high order, that it may reasonably be said to be an evidence of want of judgment on Wedgwood's part that he did not further encourage it, rather than commissioning reproductions from the antique. Possibly it was the eternal question of *cost*. As an example of Flaxman's more purely individual designs, the charming pedestal or drum, with fringe of cupids ("Blind man's buff"), may be cited: one of these pedestals is in the South Kensington Collection.

The fine medallion portraits modelled by Flaxman must not

be forgotten. These include Lord Chatham, Mrs. Siddons, Bœrhaave, the Queen of Portugal, Sir Joseph Banks, and others.

Flaxman also modelled a set of chessmen, fine in style and exhibiting the best characteristics of his marked individuality.

But the most generally known of all Wedgwood's jasper pieces is the celebrated "Portland Vase" (Portland's mystic urn), the story of which is steeped in romance, and which, although told many times, may be retold here.

In 1594 a Roman sculptor, one Flaminius Vacca, in a letter to a friend refers to the discovery of a finely sculptured sarcophagus in a sepulchral chamber under the Monte del Grano, a small hill near Rome. The sarcophagus dates from the third century A.D., and the ashes it contains were supposed to be those of Alexander Severus and his mother. The identity of these ashes is, however, a matter of some uncertainty. Bartoli gives an engraving of the section of the hill, showing the construction of the different vaults and chambers, together with the modern villa which is built upon the summit of the hill, and the cypresses which cover it. The sarcophagus was found to contain a vase of glass paste in two layers, cut with figures of splendid workmanship, illustrating, according to Winckelmann, the story of Peleus and Thetis. It was subsequently acquired by the Barberini family, and in 1623, when Matteo Barberini was raised to the Pontificate as Urban VIII., he placed it in the library of his palace on the Quirinial, thus restoring it to men's admiring gaze after its long sleep of over twelve hundred years.

The vase remained in the possession of the Barberini family until the middle of the eighteenth century, when, owing to the poverty to which at that period many great Roman families were

reduced, compelling them to part with many of their art treasures, it was acquired by a Scotch antiquary, James Byres, from whom it was purchased for £1,000 in 1782 by Sir William Hamilton, then Ambassador at the Court of Naples, who brought it to London in the following year.

It then passed into the possession of the Duchess of Portland, the negotiations for its transfer being conducted with much secrecy, so much secrecy, indeed, that it was not known until after the death of the Duchess that the vase had entered her possession.

The story of the public auction, which took place in 1786, has been often told, and with many variations. Wedgwood desired to obtain it for the purpose of making copies in jasper. The Duke of Portland wished it to be retained in the possession of his family.

By arrangement, the wishes of both the nobleman and the potter were attained. The Duke bought the vase for £1,029, and Wedgwood obtained it on loan for the purpose of making reproductions.

The vicissitudes of the vase had, however, not yet come to an end. It was deposited in the British Museum by the fourth Duke in 1810, and in 1845 a fanatical visitor, apparently in a moment of frenzy, picked up a fragment of sculpture, hurled it at the vase, and broke it literally into a thousand pieces. The vase was afterwards carefully pieced together by an able craftsman in the employ of the museum, and is now the central object of interest in the Gems Room.

Wedgwood worked patiently for several years, endeavouring to make as fine a reproduction as possible, and, in 1790, after making many experiments, his first copy was exhibited in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, and was afterwards publicly

JUG, PAINTED UNDER-GLAZE, ADAMS OF GREENFIELDS
Tunstall Museum

BASALTES KETTLE, WEDGWOOD
Burslem Museum

exhibited in his showrooms in Greek Street, Soho, the exhibition being attended by large numbers of people anxious to make acquaintance with a remarkable reproduction of a great work of art.

Wedgwood issued a subscription list for fifty at fifty guineas each, although the precise number actually made is a matter of some uncertainty. It is certain, however, that the sum realised fell far short of the cost of production.

The second class of ware more directly identified with Wedgwood is *black basaltes*. This is one of the wares the quality of which Wedgwood materially improved. It owes its colour to the presence of iron, and was black throughout.

Black basaltes, although extremely fine, and in some surroundings exceedingly effective, has never been so popular as jasper, no doubt on account of its grave, and even funereal appearance. It has a very fine surface, the beauty of which was heightened by the polishing of the lapidary's wheel.*

A number of fine busts were made in this ware, among which may be mentioned those of Bacon, Ben Jonson, Barneveldt, Cato, Cicero, and Zeno.

Vases in this material were somewhat of a speciality, and were occasionally large in size. The fine pair of vases with

* Mr. F. Rathbone says, Wedgwood speaks of polishing, but that he only meant the edges of cameos, plaques, and medallions. In regard to the Portland Vase, however, he says: "The reliefs were most carefully undercut by the modeller, and polished after firing."

Mr. W. Turner quotes Miss Meteyard's "Handbook," in which she says that Wedgwood wrote to Bentley to propose that "an engine be acquired for polishing . . . the raised as well as the plain parts." Miss Meteyard observes that no forger can imitate this "polish," and once the sense of it is acquired by the collector it is a power in his hands.

Mr. Turner points out that it is known that a lapidary, within the past thirty years, was in the habit of polishing the modern jasper and passing it off as real old Wedgwood.

satyr handles, modelled by Flaxman, occur in a number of well-known collections.

Besides busts and vases, a variety of objects were made in this ware, such as cameos, intaglios, seals, plaques, etc.

Wedgwood never rivalled either the Elerses or Astbury in the quality of the *red ware* or *Rosso antico,* which was the third class of ware which he produced. The colour was comparatively poor and the body was coarser in grain than that of his predecessors. He had employed it in some of his earliest cameos and bas-reliefs, and about the year 1776 efforts were made to improve the quality of the body. In a letter to Bentley in the early part of that year he describes it as "vulgar," and explains that if it had not been made in Tpots and the commonest wares, his objections would not have existed. Possibly it was a case of sour grapes. He had been wishing to make use of it for "heads for the cheap cabinets," etc., and a little later he writes to Bentley advising him to fix upon one of the bronze-like colours for this purpose, "as we shall never be able to make the Rosso Antico," except as suggesting a "red pot tea pot."

White *semi-porcelain*, or stoneware, was the fourth class of wares which Wedgwood produced, and was one in which he effected considerable improvement. It was used for the plinths of his variegated vases, and also for some portrait medallions and plaques.

Variegated wares formed the fifth class. The character of these has been described in the previous chapter. Wedgwood undoubtedly advanced the character of Agate and similar marbled wares.

The sixth class of ware which Wedgwood produced, and that in which some of his chief triumphs were gained, was the cream-coloured earthenware, or "Queen's ware," as it was subsequently called.

WHAT WEDGWOOD DID

Its history takes us back to the year 1750, when Aaron Wedgwood and William Littler introduced the system of glazing in a fluid glaze, or "dipping," in place of the dry, powdered material; which innovation has already been referred to in the chapter on salt-glaze. Nine years afterwards Wedgwood began to make experiments in this kind of ware, and eventually produced a lead-glazed body which completely superseded the old salt-glazed wares. This is not surprising, as salt-glaze, although possessing certain qualities unrivalled for decorative or ornamental pieces, was unsuitable for domestic purposes, as any one passing a steel knife over the surface of a salt-glazed plate would at once perceive. Wedgwood's ware was exactly suited to its purpose; it had a beautiful even glaze, the colour was of a pleasant creamy tone, and the potting was perfect. It was Wedgwood's boast that he could pile twelve dozen of his Queen's ware plates in a single "bung" without their toppling over.

The name "Queen's ware" was derived from the fact that in 1762 Wedgwood had presented to Queen Charlotte a breakfast service of his cream-coloured earthenware, and had received the title of "Potter to her Majesty."

About this time Mr. John Sadler, a master printer of Liverpool, had been experimenting in a process of printing upon ware by means of paper transfers, and upon his perfecting this process Wedgwood opened negotiations with the firm, which had become Messrs. Sadler and Green, Mr. Sadler having entered into partnership with Mr. Guy Green, also a printer, and had established a business.

The ultimate result was that every fortnight a consignment of Wedgwood's ware left Burslem for Liverpool for the purpose of being decorated by this transfer process.

We give an illustration (p. 214) of a toilet service of this

ware, made by Wedgwood and decorated by Messrs. Sadler and Green.

Wedgwood's cream ware deserved the immense reputation which it enjoyed. It was, as previously stated, excellently potted. It was invariably well designed and modelled. His perforated "basket ware" was a triumph of technical excellence.

We also give an illustration of an interesting tea-cup, modelled in very low relief with an all-over pattern of a vine. The pen-line fails to convey the delicacy of the modelling of this piece, and the details are lost in a photograph. It is uncoloured, the handle is solid gilt (leaf gold), with a broad band of gold round the rim of the cup.

WEDGWOOD CREAM WARE TEA-CUP, MODELLED BY HACKWOOD. COLLECTION OF JOHN EYRE, R.B.A.

It would be rash to declare any limit to the classes of ware (excepting only porcelain) which Wedgwood made. We are so accustomed to identify Wedgwood with the jasper, basaltes, and cream-colour—the wares to which he chiefly devoted his great energies—that we are taken somewhat aback when a collector shows us an old Staffordshire figure, and asks us to name its maker. We say, perhaps, Ralph Wood, and are shown triumphantly the stamp of Wedgwood on the bottom. It is the same with painted, enamelled, lustred, and stone wares; and some of the blue printed wares (which Wedgwood did not cultivate to any extent) are singularly unlike the types of decoration we are accustomed to associate with Wedgwood.

TOILET WARE MADE BY WEDGWOOD, AND DECORATED BY SADLER AND GREEN, LIVERPOOL
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

CREAM-COLOURED TUREEN AND TEAPOT. JOSEPH MAYER
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

Wedgwood himself was no artist, he was a tradesman pure and simple ; but he was an absolutely ideal tradesman from the trader's point of view. He was keenly alive to the importance, to the necessity, in fact, of art as an adjunct to manufacture, and this is certainly more than can be said of the majority of the manufacturers of the present day. He therefore employed the very best artistic talent (according to his judgment) which was then available. Professor Church, in a monograph on Wedgwood, published some few years ago in the "Portfolio," gives a list of artists who are known to have been working for Wedgwood, together with the dates. This list includes such famous names as Angelini (Rome, 1787), John Bacon, George Barrett, John Flaxman, Pacetti (Rome, 1787), Sir Joshua Reynolds, Stothard, Roubiliac, and the animal painter Stubbs.

This list is, however, somewhat misleading, as it conveys the impression that all these artists were working for Wedgwood's *pottery*. As a matter of fact, Bacon did very little ; George Barrett practically nothing. Sir Joshua Reynolds executed no commissions except for portraits, although one or two of the subjects of his pictures were reproduced in jasper. Indeed he was unsuited to decorative work, and once essayed a stained-glass window, which is one of the curiosities of decoration. Stothard would have done admirable designs for pottery, and, in his youth, is said to have worked for Wedgwood. Miss Meteyard gives a comparatively uninteresting design for a tile ; there exists also a tea service printed in black, with figures designed by him. Roubiliac died in 1762, and, as Miss Meteyard says, it is not probable that Mr. Wedgwood knew him personally. He greatly admired his works, however, and reproduced some of his minor things. The painter Stubbs did a little modelling for Wedgwood, in addition to his portrait commissions.

Wedgwood applied his artistic material to all the various kinds of pieces which he produced. The same figures, ornamental borders, diapered patterns, etc., did duty on vases, plaques, dishes, tea ware, etc. This, however, is perfectly legitimate, provided it is done with judgment, and was no more than was done by the Italian artists of the great period; the splendid altar-pieces which we admire in the National Gallery and elsewhere were produced by Orcagna *and Co.* (or other great names, as the case may be), who not only did the framing as well, but were prepared to supply all the different paraphernalia of church furniture, the same figures and patterns doing duty over and over again. In the case of Wedgwood the result was *not always* happy. Indeed it could scarcely be so, in view of his enormous output.

In a dish or plate in the De La Rue Collection, in which is represented a copy of a picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds ("The Infant Academy"), the subject is too small in proportion to the plate; the ornamental border of the well-known classic acanthus and water leaves, does not sufficiently fill the space. And, moreover, the border, which was originally used as the decoration of a particular classic moulding, seems in this instance out of place, although borders of a similar character have been used on Gubbio plates with very good effect.

This same acanthus and water leaf border again appears (to mention another of the numerous instances) in the interior of the cups of the famous Russian service (previously referred to), painted for the Empress Catherine II., one of Wedgwood's earliest patrons. The service, which is painted enamel, is decorated with landscapes, views of English country seats, some not very well designed, as in the saucer belonging to the cup above mentioned. The landscape in this instance is surrounded by a border which is

a flat rendering of the well-known classic fluted moulding, which also appears round the lower part of the cup. Outside this is another border of a naturalistic convolvulus pattern. These borders, with their enclosed landscape, together with the acanthus leaves in the interior of the cup, combine to produce an effect which is incongruous to the last degree.

The above instance, however, and others which, no doubt, might be quoted are exceptions to the general rule of most capable performance. Every man's work must necessarily vary in quality, much more so than productions of a great manufactory. Indeed Bentley, himself a man of great natural perception, in a letter to Cox, Newport St., December 7, 1768, one of the few of his original letters now extant, given in Miss Meteyard's "Life," expresses this with a certain humorous grace. He speaks of the difficulty of making fine and perfect things of any kind. He cites the example of our "great mistress Nature," who often fails even in the finest order of her productions: "the angelic sex themselves are not all perfectly straight, delicate, and beautiful no more than our vases."

Flaxman's relations with Wedgwood commence in 1775. Bentley had "discovered" him, and Wedgwood expressed his satisfaction in the fact of his having found a modeller who was so capable. He added, "It is but a few years since he was a most supreme coxcomb, but a little more experience may have cured him of this foible"; alluding, doubtless, to Flaxman's unsuccessful competition for the gold medal of the Royal Academy, and the way he expressed his dissatisfaction with the result.

It must be admitted that Flaxman commenced business relations with Wedgwood in a very modest way, and that the remuneration he received was small for services which were really of the greatest possible value.

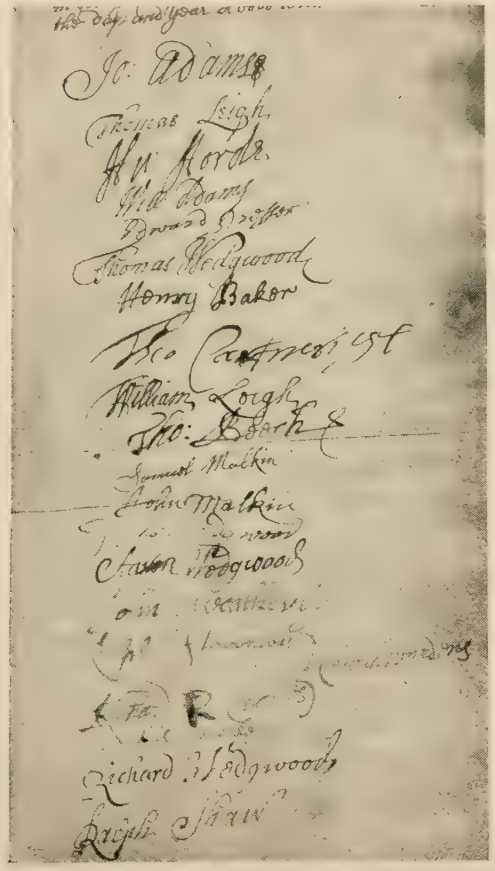
We draw an imaginary parallel between present and past periods, suggesting present-day names for those of a former period, upon a similar principle to that which Kingsley drew in his "Roman and Teuton."

The firm of Smith and Son is casting about for a modeller, and the junior partner has seen a work by Mr. G——t in the Royal Academy Exhibition of the current year, or possibly remembers the great silver centrepiece which was the gem of Queen Victoria's Jubilee gifts. Mr. G——t is duly engaged, sets to work, and in course of time tenders his first little bill as follows:

	£	s.	d.
A pair of vases with Satyr and Triton handles . . .	3	3	0
18 Basso-relievos, various classical subjects, at half a guinea each	9	9	0
2 Ditto Bacchus and Ariadne at 7s. each		14	0
2 Packing cases		6	3
An antique vase sculptured with figures	15	15	0
Moulding and making a cast of a medal, and mending a wax medal and making a mould for it . . .		2	0
	£15	9	3

The amount is debited to the extent of £2 10s. 6d. for two statues and half a dozen cups and saucers; not quite clear is the account which has come to us of the transaction, but presumably referring to "kind" which the sculptor has received in lieu of payment, a tea set with which to entertain his friends, and two statues to ornament his mantelshelf, by way of putting on a good appearance, leaving a balance of £12 18s. 9d.

A little later the head of the firm writes to his partner. Sir P——y F——e has two boys at school near London, wishes to treat his lady with their portraits . . . desires to know what the expense of modelling will be . . . "I suppose Mr. G——t will



DOCUMENT IN BURSLEM OLD CHURCH, SHOWING SIGNATURES OF TWELVE BURSLEM MANUFACTURERS

FIREPLACE SLAB: PORTRAIT OF WEDGWOOD, BY L. M. SOLON

be more moderate than Mr. Smith. (!) * Please let me have an answer as soon as may be."

Later, the head of the firm conceives the idea of making his moulds in clay, which "made them everlasting"; but as the size was reduced by firing, the sculptor had to increase the size of his models in proportion. Mr. G——t had raised his terms for modelling, the firm restricting their commissions on account of the increased cost. Possibly the increased size of the models accounts for the sculptor raising his terms, rather than the circumstance of Mr. G——t being dubbed the "Genius of Sculpture." The junior partner is cautioned "not to mention" to G——t "their process of making clay moulds"; evidently the sculptor will get no more commissions for making moulds at a shilling each.

G——t had modelled four Muses: Melpomene, Thalia, Terpsichore, and Euterpe, included in the second item of the bill given above. *Six* more were required to complete the set (our chronicler mentions only *three* as having been done; possibly one had been spoiled), the commission was given, and almost immediately countermanded.

The senior to the junior partner:

"Having laid all our bas-relief Goddesses upon their backs upon a board before me, in order to increase their number, I instantly perceived the six Muses we want might be procured from this lovely Group (presumably one of the many indifferent reproductions from the antique) at half the trouble and expense they could be procured from G——t, and much better figures. (!) For little more than 5*s*. each we can complete them very well. I hope you have not order'd

* Joachim Smith, a modeller in wax, of Berners St., Oxford St., employed by Wedgwood.

them to be model'd as I desired you would; but if you have, so be it, it is only so much loss. If he has not begun upon them you might give him as good an order in a Tablet, and all would be well."

He *had* begun upon them, and it is only justice to Messrs. Smith to say that upon completion they were perfectly satisfied with their bargain. They were used for framing, and for chimney-pieces, and also as an encircling group for some of the best vases.

The head of the firm and his wife sit to Sir E——d P——r for their portraits, both portraits providing the material for cameo medallions, the former being modelled by G——t. Several of Sir E——d's famous works are reproduced, the distinguished P.R.A. also furnishing a certificate declaring one of the firm's most important works to be a faithful copy of its original.

Mr. B——n R——e is also commissioned to paint the family, and does so on a large canvas on which is represented nine figures, four horses and ponies, and a go-cart: the same artist painting other members of the family in oils and in enamels; the bill for four pieces, including an enamel of Labourers, amounting to £471 15*s.* 3*d.* Evidently the successful animal painter can command better prices than the poor "Genius of Sculpture."

It would serve no purpose to continue this parallel. In 1778 the mild and modest Flaxman visited the Potteries,* not, of course, as the guest of the great man—that would be "infra dig"; besides, he might raise his prices in consequence. It is an

* There is a room in the manufactory which is still shown as the room in which Flaxman worked, which fact makes Wedgwood's letter to Bentley, in which it is stated that "Mr. Flaxman called to tell me," etc., a little difficult of understanding, as Wedgwood would be constantly at the works, which are only a matter of five hundred yards from the Hall, and Flaxman could have seen him there.

WEDGWOOD AND BYERLEY'S SHOWROOMS IN YORK STREET, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE
From a mezzotint of the period

instance of Time's revenges. Flaxman has long ago gained his rightful inheritance as one of the greatest influences in English sculpture, and it is one of the proudest boasts of the Wedgwoods that Flaxman was employed by them; and, we may add, one of their chief claims to distinction.

Later, no doubt, Flaxman obtained better prices. In 1783 he is paid £11 for a bas-relief of boys in wax. In 1787 he obtains fifteen guineas for a model of Peace preventing Mars from bursting the door of Janus's temple, although about the same time (1783) he designs the border of a plate for the modest sum of 3*s*.

Hackwood appears to have been Wedgwood's chief portrait modeller. He was an artist of considerable talent, with even, perhaps, a touch of genius. As a modeller, he seems to have been the utility man of the establishment, for he modelled a quantity of miscellaneous work as well as a very large number of portraits of statesmen, poets, warriors, and potentates. His portraits of local celebrities alone are numerous, and include members of Wedgwood's family, and his two partners, Bentley and Byerley. The two latter, with the portrait of Wedgwood himself, are evidently most characteristic likenesses. In 1818 there was a Hackwood, partner with Dimmock, in Hanley, and in 1842 the New Hall Works passed into the hands of W. Hackwood and Son.

In 1790 Wedgwood admitted his three sons, John, Josiah, and Thomas, together with his nephew Thomas Byerley (who had been something of a wild scamp in his earlier years), into partnership. An illustration is given at page 220 of Wedgwood and Byerley's showrooms in York Street, St. James's Square, from an engraving of the period. From this time, although not old, being but sixty, his health began gradually to decline. He

died on one of the first days of January, 1795, having accumulated a fortune of over half a million.

The marks used by the firm of Wedgwood, by which the finer productions of the firm may be identified, consist mainly of the word Wedgwood, in capital letters and in varying sizes, impressed on the ware before firing. This, indeed, is the mark invariably employed by the firm at the present day; the difference, extremely slight, between the old and the more recent marks, being in the character of the letters, the round letters being rounder, as in the more purely Roman type. Occasionally, only the initial letter was a capital. During Wedgwood's tenancy of the Ivy House Works he probably used no mark, his business not having assumed any great importance. During the term of his partnership with Bentley the two names were at first used one above the other as follows WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY, but afterwards in a circle with an inner and outer ring; in the later period of the partnership the word ETRURIA was added. The words Wedgwood and Bentley, forming an oval, in lower-case letters with capitals, and punctuated, is a rare mark found only on seal intaglios. The round and oval marks only are punctuated.

About 1860 or a little later, a movement was set afoot for the purpose of erecting a permanent and worthy memorial to this remarkable man, in his native town, Burslem, which took the shape of an Institute, which is at once a Museum of Ceramic Art, a School of Design, a Laboratory, and a free Public Library. The building, the first stone of which was laid on October 26, 1863, by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, although blackened almost out of recognition by the grimy smoke of the district, recalls the architectural triumphs of the Italian Renaissance, chiefly, however, on account of the remarkable decorative sculpture

TWO PANELS OF THE "MONTHS" FROM THE FAÇADE OF THE WEDGWOOD INSTITUTE, BURSLEM. BY ROWLAND MORRIS

which adorns it, illustrations of which are given here, and which, we imagine, will come somewhat as a surprise to the younger generation of artists, possibly also to the public, as the panels have not, so far as we are aware, been illustrated of recent years, and are therefore little known. The modelling of the life-size terra-cotta statue, together with the two series of terra-cotta panels, was placed in the hands of the students of the National Art Training School at South Kensington; but, as in the more famous instance of Mantegna and the decoration of the Eremitani Chapel at Padua, the commission of which was also placed with an art school, that of Squarcione, one student, Rowland Morris, proved himself by far the strongest, and appropriated the lion's share of the work.

Mr. Gladstone, on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone, in the course of a speech which has always been considered one of his most successful oratorical efforts, possibly on the same principle that Andrea del Sarto was called the "faultless painter," said, "I call him the great Wedgwood. That is the proper epithet for him. In my opinion, and I have considered the matter as well as I can, Wedgwood was the greatest man who ever, in any age, or in any country . . . applied himself to the important work of uniting art with industry. . . . He recalled into existence the very spirit of Greek art. Before his time we may say of the earthenware and porcelain manufacture that it had never risen to the loftiness of the spirit of Greek art. If you compare the famous porcelain of Sèvres with the vases of Wedgwood, I don't hesitate to say they are greatly inferior. . . . Though in all his productions you are reminded of Greek art, they are not mere reproductions. His style is strikingly original."

It would be as unkind to inquire closely into the speech

of a man whose life was spent storm-tossed on the tumultuous sea of politics, upon the subject of what Whistler once called "This strange matter of art," coaching himself or getting coached for the occasion, to make use of his own expression, "as well as (he) can," as it would be to criticise the speech of an artist upon the subject of the mysteries of statecraft.

Professor Middleton, who wrote the article on Pottery for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," forms a different estimate of Wedgwood from that of Gladstone. He says:

"He neglected the special requirements of fictile work. His productions, delicate and beautiful as they are, have the characteristics of anything rather than pottery.

"At great labour and expense he turned out from his workshops imitations, necessarily unsuccessful, of ancient engraved gems and cameos, of jasper, basaltes, or mottled marble, of gem-like cut glass such as the Portland Vase, and dull copies, feeble in drawing and hard in texture, of beautifully painted Greek vases. Of natural methods of decoration suitable to pottery, or of the life and freedom of the plastic clay rising in graceful forms under the thrower's hand, aided by the rhythmical movement of the wheel, he knew nothing. Nearly all his pottery is dully scholastic and archæological in style, and therefore must on the whole be regarded as a failure, though often a very clever and beautiful failure."

Wedgwood's style, so far from being "strikingly original," was the prevailing style of the period, a quasi-classicism not by any means admirable, but still good of its kind, and the result, in this country, at any rate, of a natural reaction from the exuberances and extravagances of the periods of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. The brothers Adam had far more to do with influencing artistic taste than Wedgwood, who did not influence

it in the least, but simply accepted existing conditions. We are still waiting for the man who will inaugurate a new art epoch—and make a fortune at the same time. Palissy broke up his household furniture for fuel for his kiln; J. P. Elers became a merchant in Dublin, finding fine ceramic art unremunerative. Dwight of Fulham endeavoured to arrange his will in such a manner as would prevent his family from continuing in the business.

It is difficult to conceive that Mr. Gladstone, although not an artist, could be so entirely lacking in the sense of proportion as to be unaware of the fact that since the Greek period was one of the very greatest in the art history of the world, any comparison with the eighteenth century A.D., so far as art is concerned, is an absurdity; that any comparison between the productions of Sèvres and those of Wedgwood is out of the question, the qualities sought after in the one being so entirely opposed to that of the other. Mr. Gladstone is addressing a provincial audience; he must say something complimentary; the tones of the picture he is painting must not be too subtly blended; he must apply his colours as a scene painter does, for effect; he must not pay a too great attention to the niceties of detail, especially as his subject is one which in the very nature of things he cannot possibly be master of.

What Wedgwood did was of amply sufficient value and importance to warrant him standing, so to speak, upon his own legs, or, to be literally correct, upon his own leg and stump, what Darwin called his "no leg," without needing to be bolstered up by being invested with qualities which he did not possess. It serves no good purpose to endeavour to place him on a level with Phidias and Praxiteles. The age in which he lived, if nothing else, was against him. His services to the art of potting

were great and lasting; more, on the whole, than those of any other individual Staffordshire potter, the area of his operations being so extended. Moreover, he is an absolutely typical Staffordshire man; whatever his shortcomings were, and they were many, he *stands*, as it were, for the district. His virtues and his foibles are those of the Staffordshire potter generally; his enterprise, his initiative, and his unfailing courage stamping him as one of the most remarkable men of his time. The epitaph upon his monument in the parish church of Stoke-upon-Trent, which states that he "converted a rude and inconsiderable Manufactory (*sic*) into an elegant Art" is a ludicrous travesty of the fact. What he *really* did was to convert an Art—rude it may be, and inconsiderable, but still an Art—into a manufacture. In other words, he inaugurated an entirely new order of things in the production of pottery, and a less desirable one.

It is difficult—when considering the sum of his achievements, and seeing, as it were, behind the veil, the little flashes of personality disclosed in his voluminous correspondence with Bentley, and other documents—to ignore the many-faceted character of the man. He had a keen eye to the "main chance," and where he imagined his interests were attacked (as in the case of Champion) he employed voluble arguments which showed him to be credulous, and at times, perhaps, not too scrupulous. Ralph Shaw mentions a pamphlet written by Josiah Wedgwood in 1783, "to prevent potters emigrating with his (Shaw's) son to France, and others to America," which throws a curious light upon one side of Wedgwood's character. We have had an opportunity of examining this pamphlet, which we believe has not been published since its original issue in 1783. It is entitled:

TERRA-COTTA PANELS BY ROWLAND MORRIS, FROM THE FAÇADE OF THE WEDGWOOD INSTITUTE, BURSLEM

An Addreſs

to the workmen in the Pottery on the ſubject of entering into the ſervice of Foreign Manufacturers.

By Joſiah Wedgwood F.R.S.
Potter to His Majeſty.

'A Rolling Stone gathers no Moſs'
Old Prov.

Newcaſtle. Staffordſhire.
Printed by J. Smith 1783.

It is somewhat unfortunate that the exigencies of space do not allow us to print this amazing address in full. Wedgwood commences by detailing the supposed experiences of Bartlem, who went out to South Carolina. He says:

"About 17 years ago Mr. Bartlem, a maſter Potter, who had been unſucceſſful here, went to South Carolina, and by offers made from thence, very advantageous in appearance, prevailed upon ſome of our workmen to leave this country and to come to him. They took ſhipping at Briſtol, and after more than a quarter of a year ſpent in ſtorms and tempeſts upon the ſea, with many narrow eſcapes from ſhipwreck, they arrived at laſt ſafe, and began to work near Charleſtown." He explains how the fine wages and advantages "puffed up" by the governor of the province turned out a delusion and a snare, and that the unfortunate workmen were all attacked by a "diſorder of mind peculiar to Staffordſhire people" which carried them off so fast that "recruits could not be found to fill the places of the dead men."

He continues: "In Mr. Goodwin's own words to me, whoſe ſon was one of them, *they fell ſick as they came, and all died quickly*, his ſon amongſt the reſt." (The italics are Wedgwood's.)

He proceeds to narrate the fate of Mr. Lymer's family. Lymer was a brother-in-law to Bartlem, and "heir to a pretty eſtate," and he followed Bartlem, taking with him his wife and two children.

"Storms and tempeſts" again ensued, with actual shipwreck on this occasion, "near an iſland of which I cannot remember the name." Most of the sailors were drowned, and the survivors were in a "comfortleſs ſituation," which was intensified by Mrs. Lymer giving birth to another child. Young Lymer "shiped" himself into a vessel, "too impatient for Mrs. Lymer's recovery," and was never heard of again. Bartlem, deprived of his whole colony of workers, returned to England to raise fresh supplies. He had been subsidised by the State to the extent of £500, but could not proceed on account of his work-people being depleted by that extraordinary disorder of mind peculiar to Staffordshire people.

Only one returned, "one William Ellis, of Hanley, who ſtated that the wages were good enough, one guinea a week with their board, but that they never got half of it." Another equally fruitless attempt was made in Pennsylvania. The events were monotonously similar to those recorded, but in this case the proprietors not only gave up the undertaking, but "ſilenced the juſt complaints of the poor injured workmen by clapping one of them (Thomaſ Gale) into a priſon." The rest never got half their wages, and were reduced to begging in the streets, some dying.

"Mr. Byerley, a nephew of mine," says Wedgwood, "who was then upon the spot, publiſhed in the newſpapers a letter in behalf of the poor ſurvivors."

It had no effect upon the employers, but a subscription was set on foot. The subscription was only a temporary palliative, for, "like plants removed into a ſoil unnatural to them, they

dwindled away and died, and not one was left to return and give uſ any further particulars of this affecting tale." He proceeds to paint in vivid colours the grasping and discontented natures of those who do "not content themſelves with the good things of this land, *a land flowing with milk and honey* [the italics again are Wedgwood's], and exhort you to beware of falling into the like errors as you would wiſh to eſcape the fatal conſequences. But let the errors of the dead ſleep with them."

He next deals with the case of George Shaw, "who left this kingdom ten years ago, and was now ſent hither, as he ſaid, from ſome part of France." Wedgwood deals with the boastful character of Shaw's promises, and endeavours to show that the wages promised could not possibly be realised, or, if realised, of short duration. He points out that they would be compelled to take apprentices, as was the case nearer home—Yorkshire and elsewhere—and that when the apprentices became skilled, wages would be lowered.

"And ſuch low wages would afford but miſerable ſubſiſtence to Engliſhmen brought up from their infancy to better and more ſubſtantial fare than frogs, hedgehogs, and the wild herbs of the field." After awakening the English fear (as Emerson puts it) that "somebody was fumbling at the umbilical cord and might stop their supplies," he says: "Your Indignation, I make no doubt, will riſe at the idea of ſuch wages, and ſuch fare; and you will ſay: *No; at the worſt we can but leave them and their country when they attempt ſo to reduce our wages.* But do not deceive yourſelves; you may not have it in your power to leave them. For under arbitrary government, your maſters have ways and means enow of keeping thoſe whom they do not chooſe to part with, ſuch as inducing them to run in debt, and arreſting them for the ſum * * * * * *. But if this or any leſſer plots

ſhould fail, they have another which muſt always ſucceed. They can inſinuate to their governors that you had come among them at firſt under a falſe pretence; that you have now learned ſome of their valuable arts and manufactures, and are preparing to leave the country and carry thoſe aquiſitions to your own. This would be ſufficient to have you detained, and perhaps kept priſoner during life." He then describes how the finest lords in the land may be dragged from their beds at midnight by a *lettre de cachet*, and suggests that this mode of procedure would be followed. Then follows an impassioned appeal to their sense of duty to their friends and neighbours, with a reference to Esau's birthright and mess of pottage, and another reference to the peculiarly Staffordshire epidemic of "heart ſickneſs and deſpair—many have died of it, and thoſe who recovered declared it to be worſe than death itſelf."

"You may be ready to aſk me," he continues, "if this caſe is truly ſtated, *why does Shaw leave his native country again, and return to that ſcene of miſery you are deſcribing?* The question is very much to the purpoſe, but there is a clear and ſatisfactory anſwer to be given to it. He is a *deſerter from the army* (from the 20th regiment of foot), and as ſuch, *his life is forfieted to the laws of his country, ſo that his continuing here is impracticable.*"

Wedgwood goes on to say that this circumstance is probably known to his French employers, hence his selection as a "decoy duck." The conclusion of this quaint document is worthy of the context. He points out that according to Acts of Parliament 5th Geo. ch. 27 and 23 Geo. 2nd, it is enacted that any person convicted of the attempt to decoy British operatives to service in foreign countries is subject to fine and imprisonment, and on a second conviction, liable to a fine of £500, and "impriſonment for two years without bail or main prize."

The pamphlet concludes:

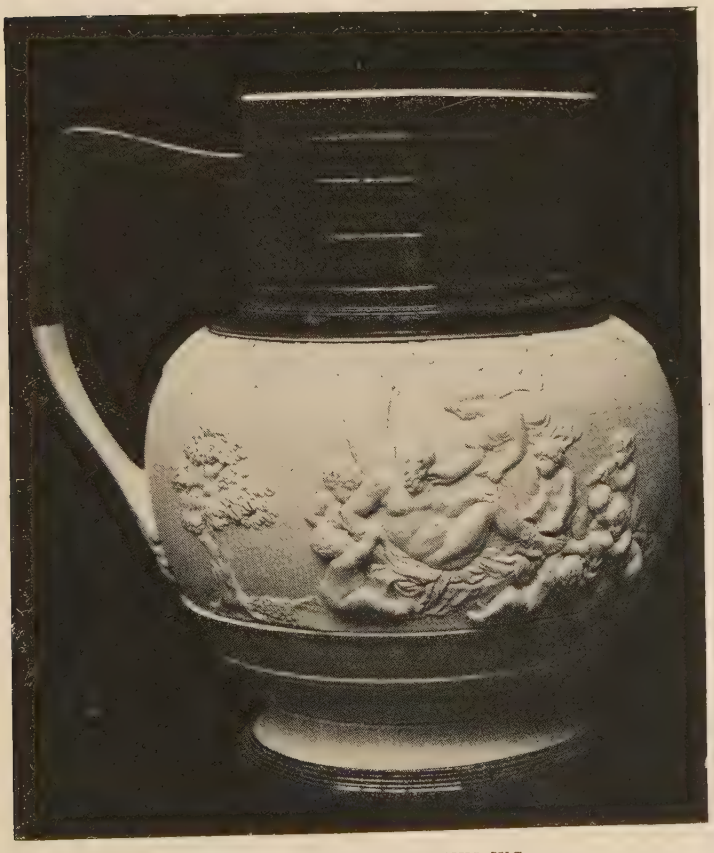
"That no motive may be wanting for the performance of your duty in concurring with your maſters in every endeavour to ſecure you and your children the full enjoyment of your birth-right in the manufacture you were brought up to: they offer you fifty guineas reward beſides what you are entitled to by Act of Parliament, for every perſon apprehended by you who ſhall be convicted of endeavouring to entice or hire any of our potters into foreign ſervice."

CHAPTER XVII

WEDGWOOD'S RIVALS, IMITATORS, AND FOLLOWERS—I

WE have seen in the preceding chapter that the operations of Wedgwood, far reaching as they were, had the effect of bringing about an entirely new state of things in the history of potting. With him, that personal element, which is a *sine qua non* of all art, completely disappeared, except in the case of Flaxman, whose individuality was so marked that no adverse conditions could entirely eradicate it. The border-land between *art* and *manufacture* will always be difficult to determine with absolute precision, but, in place of the rough tygs, posset-pots, and dishes of an earlier time, bearing so strongly the impress of their makers' personality, we get the neatly-turned pseudo-classicalities with which we are familiar, perfect in finish, perfect—too perfect—in workmanship, and wanting only that mysterious something which marks the difference between art and manufacture. Professor Church's remarks in his useful little South Kensington hand-book are so much to the point that they may well be quoted. He says: "Perfection of material and workmanship displaced the old native picturesqueness, vigour was sacrificed to finish, originality to elegance. But it would be most unfair to the memory of Wedgwood if too much stress were laid upon this critical view of his methods and style. The improvements which he effected in the ceramic industry of the

ADAMS SLAB. DIANA RESTING AFTER THE CHASE
Bagshawe Collection



ADAMS STONEWARE : SILENUS JUG
Burslem Museum

country were too substantial to be seriously compromised by the want of spontaneity in the artistic character of much of his choicer ornamental ware."

While hesitating, therefore, to affirm that Wedgwood's achievement, together with his remarkable personality, had focussed to him more than his due meed of appreciation and admiration, it is beyond question the fact, that at least two of Wedgwood's rivals and friends—Adams and Turner—were not appreciated as they deserved, but were overshadowed by their great rival's fame. Wedgwood himself felt no contempt, but, on the contrary, experienced a most singular respect for his two friendly rivals. It is recorded that he went "clay hunting" with Turner, doubtless in search of the native red marls which they both used with such skill and judgment. Adams was Wedgwood's favourite pupil. He was only fifteen years younger than his master, having been apprenticed when Wedgwood himself was quite young.

John Adams was the earliest known potter of a very prolific family, nearly all connected with the craft, although there is every probability of there having been generations of potters in the Adams family before his time. He is definitely mentioned in various documents as a potter, and is recorded as having married Mary Leadbeater in 1654. Ward, and Miss Meteyard, describe him as a maker of black and mottled ware. He it was who built and occupied the first edifice in Burslem, constructed entirely of bricks, which consisted of a house and pottery adjoining, and was called by the people of Burslem the "Brick House Works." This factory was afterwards carried on by Ralph Adams (about 1717), and he was succeeded by his son John, who died in 1757. William, son and heir of John Adams, being then only seven years old, the works was leased to Josiah Wedgwood, prior to his removal to Etruria.

Wedgwood occupied the "Brick House Pottery" for ten years, and there William Adams "of Greengates"—the William Adams whose work we are about to consider—cousin to William Adams the young proprietor—served to Wedgwood, at any rate part of his apprenticeship. We find that Miss Meteyard quotes a letter from Wedgwood to Bentley, in November, 1769, in which he says he has notice to quit the "Brick House Works" next year. The works at Etruria was then opened, though not finished, and we have evidence that Adams followed Wedgwood to Etruria.

According to the standard of the period, William Adams was well advanced in chemistry, and we hear of his consulting with and advising Wedgwood as to the composition of his "jasper" body. Miss Meteyard, who had access to many Wedgwood documents, lays stress on the high opinion Wedgwood entertained of Adams. She quotes Wedgwood as saying that he had "one really clever pupil," and points out that he became Wedgwood's favourite and friend. This is borne out by what we know of subsequent events. Wedgwood was certainly no *poseur*, but he surrounded any new discovery, and heralded any new production, with mildly dramatic ceremonial. So that when Adams finished his last vase at Etruria, Wedgwood assisted him in its "arrangement," and kept it as a souvenir of their connection. Six years after, during Wedgwood's last illness, Adams, hearing that matters had taken a critical turn, rode over post-haste to Etruria Hall in time to see his old master on his beathbed, and was there presented with the vase they "arranged" together, as a parting gift from the dying master to his favourite pupil. It is a charming little story, and has the merit (which many such stories do not possess) of being unquestionably true. About 1855 we find

ADAMS JUG: DARK BLUE SOLID JASPER, "THE SEASONS
Harland Collection

ADAMS STONEWARE JUG: PORTRAITS OF ADMIRALS
Hanley Museum

Miss Meteyard negotiating with the owner (a descendant of William Adams) for the possession of the vase, but vainly. A few years later it seems to have fallen into the possession of the husband of one of the female descendants of William Adams, and this gentleman, having no sentimental notions concerning it, parted with it to some one whose identity is untraceable. Adams and Turner, then, were not merely friendly with, but *friends* of, Wedgwood. We lay stress on this, because we desire strongly to negative the opinion held and expressed in some quarters, that all who made wares of Wedgwood's type were his imitators. We could wish that more was known of the social life of these gallant potters of the Georgian days. It is recorded that one branch of the Adams family were on terms of social intimacy with the Elerses. We have occasional glimpses of social gatherings at Fenton Hall and elsewhere, where Warburton, Hollins, Keeling, and the Adamses foregathered, and Josiah Spode attended with his fiddle, being "an expert violinist."

For some time before the connection between William Adams and Wedgwood was severed, Adams was in sufficiently good circumstances to commence pottery on his own account, and indeed he had already land for his projected pottery in Tunstall, but he probably found his work and surroundings at Etruria congenial.

He began work at Greengates in 1789, but he appears to have owned a small pottery in Burslem four years earlier, for during an illness in that year (while he was still with Wedgwood), he made a will, in which the Burslem pottery is mentioned. At Greengates he made jasper, basaltes, stoneware, and cream colour. He worked another pottery adjacent to the Greengates pottery, and he introduced into the town the method of printing from copper plates, which his cousin, William Adams of Cobridge,

had attempted several years previously. Adams made a large fortune by his blue printed wares, but it is his jasper and stonewares on which his reputation will stand. His cream stonewares are invariably fine. He made goblets, flagons, wine-coolers, mugs and loving-cups, and jugs of all sizes.

The necks, and occasionally the bases, are cleverly relieved with bands of dark brown, and the effect is heightened by the mounting of silver or Sheffield plate which he generally applied to them. The applied subjects in relief are usually of the same colour as the ground, and consist often of drinking, hunting, or bacchanalian scenes. The surface, whilst perfectly vitreous, is drier and less glossy than later stonewares of other makers, but is none the less (and possibly more) agreeable on that account. Adams's stoneware owed its surface to its own inherent vitreosity, while that produced by Spode, Ridgway, Mayer, and others had often a "smear" of glaze over the surface. The brown band, however, in the Adams pieces is invariably glazed, and some of the articles have broad and beautifully executed engine-turned fluting about the base. The beautiful example illustrated at page 332 is from the Hulme collection in the Burslem Museum. It represents on one side the "death of Silenus," and on the other a symbolical subject. It has a drooping border on the shoulder peculiar to Adams.

The fine jug with silver mount at page 234, is from the Hanley Museum. It is ornamented with portraits of admirals in low relief, and is probably modelled by Adams himself.

The drooping border again occurs on the shoulder of the fine jug ornamented with hunting scenes, illustrated opposite. This has also engine-turned flutes near the bottom. It is from the collection of G. F. Cox, Esq., Whalley Range, Lancashire.

JUG, ADAMS STONEWARE
Cox Collection

ADAMS JUG : BACCHANALIANS AND SATYRS

There is a most beautiful jug in the Mawson collection, with figures of men playing at ninepins, of which, unfortunately, we have not an illustration; and Lord Tweedmouth has a remarkable wine-cooler, mounted in old Sheffield plate. This is ornamented with a group of bacchanalian cupids dragging a goat by a rope—exceedingly fine in design.

Another remarkable example is a fine cream stoneware mug belonging to the Rev. A. L. Willett. It has an "old silver" rim, and is embellished with a low relief frieze representing a band of musicians.

The tankard which is illustrated at page 236 is also mounted in old silver, and represents a frieze of bacchanalians with a satyr crowning a deity—probably Bacchus. It has all the qualities of a fine work of the Renaissance.

William Adams's Jasper is no less interesting. Unlike his stoneware, it necessarily challenged direct comparison with Wedgwood. The three jasper bodies, Wedgwood's, Turner's, and Adams's differed in quality and character, and were produced independently from different formulæ.

Various opinions are expressed as to the relative merits of these three jaspers. Mr. F. Rathbone, Professor Church, and Chaffers agree in saying that Turner's jasper nearly equals Wedgwood's. But Turner's blue—the colour chiefly used—was inferior to either Wedgwood's or Adams, the latter having a quality of tone preferred by many collectors to even that of Wedgwood. The "Adams blue," as it is affectionately termed, has a peculiar violet tone which is greatly admired by many connoisseurs. All three potters used their colour in two ways, in the form of "solid" jasper, and "surface" jasper. In the solid jasper, the body was stained throughout, while in the surface jasper the body of the vessel was white jasper with

a wash, dip, or film of the colour required. Of the latter kind the slab or tablet "Diana resting after the chase" (p. 232) is an interesting example.

This is in high relief—white figures on blue ground—and measures 18 inches by 9. It is from the Bagshawe collection, but a replica is inserted in the wall of the drawing-room in Lord Tweedmouth's seat in Inverness-shire.

The beautiful jug, mounted in old silver, of which we also give an illustration (p. 234), is from the Harland collection, and is of solid blue jasper. The subjects, representing the Seasons, are modelled by Adams himself, and are beautifully clear and sharp. The drooping border round the neck, which is peculiar to Adams, is here very effectively employed.

The tankard, with old Sheffield plate mount, is also in blue jasper. It is decorated with Adams's own models of Painting and Sculpture, daintily and sharply executed.

The designs known to be modelled by Adams himself were the Seasons—a series of Venus and Cupid subjects—Venus bound, Cupid disarmed; Psyche trying the point of one of Cupid's darts; the Muses; Charlotte and Werther; Priam begging the body of Achilles; Apollo crowning Virtue, and other subjects after Angelica Kauffmann; the Reading Girl; Sculpture, Painting, Astrology, and many others.

His other models were chiefly executed by Joseph Monglott, a Swiss.

The blue printed ware made by William Adams is fitted to rank with that produced by Wedgwood; in this connection it is difficult to speak of William Adams of Greengates alone, for there were four William Adamses, all closely related, producing blue printed ware. In fact, as Mr. Turner humorously puts it, to speak of William Adams is like speaking of John Jones in a Welsh village.

BLUE PRINTED PLATE.
Tunstall Museum. From Lady Chomley's Collection

CLAUDE LANDSCAPE, ENGRAVED BY BROOKES, ADAMS OF GREENGATES
Tunstall Museum

The William Adams before mentioned as being the juvenile proprietor of the Brick House Works, duly came of age, married Mary Bourne, and worked the Brick House Pottery for some years. Although this pottery was a fair size for the period, he built a larger pottery at Cobridge, where he potted under the style of W. Adams and Co. Wedgwood was producing printed ware, which he sent to Sadler and Green at Liverpool to be printed and transferred, as did also several other Staffordshire manufacturers. Some desultory attempts had been made to do the printing in Staffordshire, but Adams of Cobridge was the first who had the enterprise to carry out the process on his own works. In 1775 he employed an engraver named William Davis, who had been trained under Robert Hancock at Worcester. Adams of Cobridge first attempted the process known as "bat printing," by which the lines of the engraving on the copper plate are filled with an adhesive and sticky oil. The surface of the plate is "bossed" clean, leaving the oil in the interstices. An impression is then taken on a "bat" made of a soft and gelatinous substance, which is then applied to the ware, leaving the pattern in oily lines. On these powdered colour is dusted, adhering only to the oily pattern, and leaving the other parts clear. It will be seen that this process was altogether too troublesome and complicated for effective and economical working; it was therefore soon abandoned by Adams, and the ordinary method of transferring adopted. Other manufacturers, however, employed it intermittently, and it is still employed by the large firms such as Minton's. Adams's engraver, Davis, and his brother helped the Baddeleys of Shelton, and, according to Shaw, Spode had commenced to make printed ware in 1784. A few years later we find Davenports, Ridgways, Enoch Wood, and Thomas Minton (who had

been an engraver at Caughley) prosecuting the trade vigorously. But Adams of Greengates followed early in the steps of his cousin of the Brick House and Cobridge, and in 1787 had introduced in Tunstall the blue printed wares by means of which he built up his fortune. He took care to employ an excellent engraver, one William Brookes, whose descendants in a direct line have all been engravers—at least one descendant still practising the trade. We illustrate (p. 238) two perforated dishes with Claude landscapes engraved by Brookes. One of the subjects is repeated in the four-sided dish illustrated opposite.

We also give (p. 238) an illustration of a fine plate designed freely on an Oriental model. It is of a beautiful pale blue tone, and very decorative. It is from the Tunstall Museum, and was obtained, together with a beautiful triangular supper-dish, from the late Lady Chomley's Collection.

The business at Greengates was continued by a trustee for William Adams's son Benjamin, and afterwards for a few years by Benjamin himself. Benjamin produced some fine blue plates, stamped with his name. He appears to have paid the same attention to blue printed wares that his father paid to jasper and stonewares. But the quality eventually deteriorated, and Benjamin afterwards sold the works to Mr. Meir. The family, as potters, in a direct line from Adams of Greengates, is extinct, but the works has again fallen into the hands of another branch of the same family, who have successfully revived the traditions of their celebrated relative. The other three William Adamses were notable potters, and too important to be passed without notice. We have already referred to Adams of Brick House and Cobridge.

The four William Adamses may be placed chronologically as follows:

SPONGED WARE. ADAMS OF GREENFIELDS
Tunstall Museum

CLAUDE LANDSCAPE, ENGRAVED BY BROOKES. ADAMS OF GREENGATES
Tunstall Museum

1. William Adams of Greengates . . . . 1745—1805
2. William Adams of Brick House and Cobridge Hall . . . . . 1748—1831
3. William Adams of Stoke-on-Trent . . . 1772—1829
4. William Adams of Greenfields . . . . 1798—1865

The first three were cousins, and the last two father and son. The families of both Greengates and Cobridge Hall (Brick House) Adamses are extinct.

The descendants of their common ancestor, John Adams, and of William Adams of Stoke, are now carrying on the manufactories of Greengates and Greenfields. To attempt to clearly describe all the branches of this remarkable family who have a claim on our notice would be vain without the help of a family tree, which Mr. Turner gives in his "William Adams, Master Potter." But it is sufficient to say that Adams of Stoke, and his son of Greenfields, continued the manufacture of blue printed ware, which they made of a quality unsurpassed by any of their contemporaries. It was richer and deeper in colour than that of their kinsman of Greengates, as will be seen from a comparison of the illustrations. The plate and dish with cathedral, and view in London, are examples of Adams of Greenfields, and Clews.

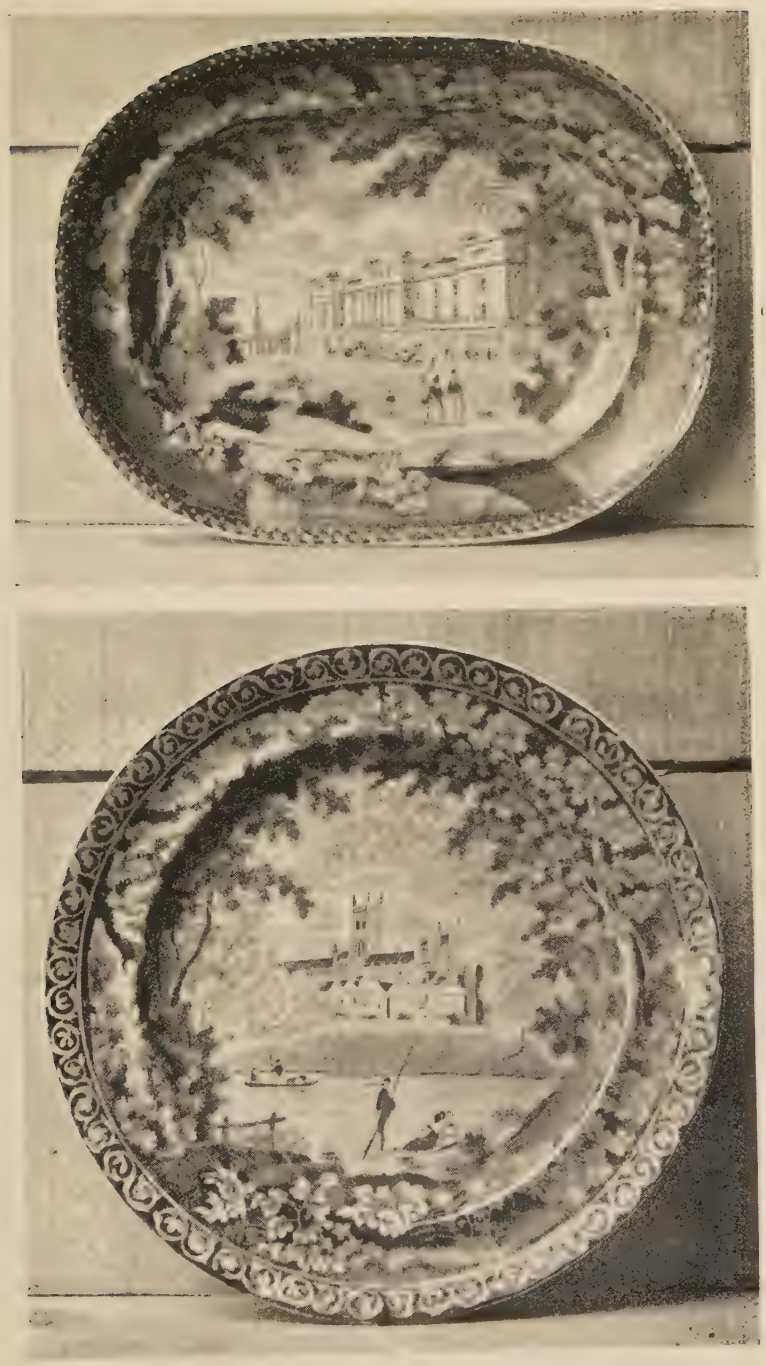
The plate, dish, and bowl (p. 240) are instances of a not inartistic application of the common "sponging" process of decoration. These were produced at Greenfields, as was also the jug, pencilled under-glaze (p. 210), which shows a facile application of brushwork, in a good style, by ordinary operatives, and which might well be emulated by present-day workmen, who could easily be trained to do it as readily as it was done at an earlier period.

Another Adams,—Richard—born in 1739, was cousin to the

Brick House Adams. He made white stoneware and salt-glaze at the Hulton Abbey Pottery, and is credited with the production of the interesting slip-decorated cradle described in a previous chapter.

The Adams family not only made their mark upon the ceramics of Staffordshire, but must have been a great social force. There were Adamses in most of the mansions of the district. They lived at Fenton Hall; Cobridge Hall; Basford Hall; The Mount, Penkhull (one-time residence of Josiah Spode); The Watlands (home of Sir Oliver Lodge); Greenfields; and other interesting and beautiful places, some still interesting and beautiful. Llewellyn Jewitt, in his "Ceramic Art of Great Britain," says: "Messrs. William Adams and Son (Adams of Stoke and Greenfields) had at one time five separate works (in Stoke alone), three of which had formerly been Mr. Wolfe's, the fourth the Bridge Works, and the fifth Hugh Booth's, Messrs. Henry and Richard Daniel, Mr. Zachary Boyle, and Messrs. *Samuel* and George *Read*, etc."

The value of Jewitt's contribution to British Ceramics can hardly be overestimated, but he was often very inaccurate in small matters; there are two (possibly unimportant) mistakes in the last four words. The occupants of the Adams factory mentioned, were *Sampson*, and George *Rhead*, grandfather and great-uncle of the present writers.



BLUE PRINTED WARE : DISH, ADAMS OF GREENFIELDS ; PLATE, BY CLEWS
Tunstall Museum

CHAPTER XVIII

WEDGWOOD'S RIVALS, IMITATORS, AND FOLLOWERS—II

JOHN TURNER of Green Dock commenced potting about the year 1762. Wedgwood invented his jasper about 1775, and introduced the jasper dip, or "surface jasper," about two years later. He was soon followed by Turner and Adams, who probably had been acquainted by Wedgwood himself of the development and perfection of this material.

Information respecting Turner is very meagre. It is not positively known where he learnt his business, nor is it known what his particular craft was, although it is said that he was a turner by profession as well as name. We know that Adams was a modeller, and Wedgwood a thrower, and all three were reputed to be "good chemists and artists."

Shaw tells us that "about 1756, Mr. R. Bankes and the late Mr. John Turner, made white stoneware at Stoke, on the spot part of the premises of Josiah Spode, Esq. Mr. Turner removed to Lane End in 1762, where he manufactured every kind of pottery then in demand, and also introduced some other kinds not previously known. About 1780, he discovered a vein of fine clay, on the land of Green Dock. . . . From this he obtained all his supplies for manufacturing his beautiful and excellent *Stone Ware Pottery*, of a cane colour, which he formed into very beautiful Tygs, with ornamental designs, and the most

tasteful articles of domestic use." We also have it on record (Shaw) that Turner erected on the open ground in front of his pottery a machine by which he could turn his throwing-engine and lathes. "This was open to the inspection of all the potters of the time, but no application of the principle was made, until after steam-engines were introduced; as by Mr. Wedgwood and Mr. Spode." The engine on the open space in front of the works must have been a quaint sight; a pictorial representation of it would have been interesting. Turner, like Adams, produced original work, and never repeated any of the Wedgwood designs. The exquisite basaltes vase here illustrated, with frieze of cupids dragging a goat, is from the Burslem Museum. The same subject appears on the Adams wine-cooler, already mentioned as belonging to Lord Tweedmouth; but this is easily explained by the fact that Adams (who died in 1805) bought a number of moulds from the sale at the closing of the Turner potteries in 1803.

We illustrate opposite another charming little basaltes vase by Turner, with cupids in high relief. Genuine Turner basaltes is invariably fine. It serves no purpose to institute a comparison between this ware and that of Wedgwood's, as both are, as regards colour, surface, density, and finish, as near perfection as possible. Wedgwood's best pieces have perhaps a trifle more distinction as regards design, but in the finer examples of Turner there is little to choose in comparison. With Turner's jasper it is different. It differs from Wedgwood both in colour and texture. His blue has a curious grey tone, which some collectors admire, while others discover in it a source of dissatisfaction. The beautiful coffee-pot illustrated at page 246 is an example of this blue-grey colour. The lid and base are engine-turned, and the reliefs are fired to obtain an ivory effect. It has on the side illustrated a figure of Peace, holding a palm branch in

BLACK BASALTES TEAPOT, ELIJAH MAYER

BASALTES VASE, TURNER

Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

one hand and a cornucopia in the other, with a cupid guiding a lion. On the obverse side is a group of Aphrodite driving dolphins.

This characteristic pot is from the Frank Falkner Collection There is in the Burslem Museum a very pretty set, consisting of a teapot and stand, and sugar-box and cream jug, of pale blue jasper, in which the figures of Peace and the lion and Cupid are pirated. In this case, however, the palm branch—being apparently too big for the space—is removed, and a key substituted.

This set is by Neale. Turner's jasper is more porcellaneous than Wedgwood's, but is equally fine as a material for the potter. He made fine cane-coloured or "bamboo" ware, and his stoneware is of the most beautiful quality. There are fine specimens in the London museums, and the Hanley Museum has several admirable specimens, notably a large square teapot with oval panels in dark brown, ornamented with white figures in relief. Of his cane wares, good examples are scattered over the country in various collections. There are several in the Potteries, and Dr. Sidebotham of Bowden has a delightful pot-pourri vase, engine-turned, and ornamented with reliefs of cupids at play. Turner was successful with his hunting scenes, which he executed in every material he used. He also made busts of fine quality in white stoneware, which he usually mounted on plinths of black basaltes. Shaw says "he died in 1786, at an advanced age." Shaw's favourites have a habit of dying "at an advanced age," when he is unacquainted with the real facts. Poor Turner really died at the age of 48. There is little doubt that Turner was successful and prosperous in business. He had a large Continental business, chiefly in France and Holland. His two sons, John and William, succeeded to the business. They also appear to have been accomplished

potters, continuing the manufacture of the wares initiated by their father, and, at the same time, experimenting in other directions. They produced a blue glaze of great richness, and made some essays in the application of gold, then coming into fashion.

They do not appear to have attained any great measure of success, for even Shaw (whose praise was always of the fulsome kind), referring to the gilding, remarks, "had the ability of the Gilder been as well employed in preparing his gold, as in the execution of the Pattern, it would have equalled any of the rich Gilding at this day."

Turner's sons made a cup for Lord Cremorne (spelt by Shaw "Creamhorn") which was exhibited by Jacob Warburton—himself no mean potter—at a meeting of other potters, "to show to what a degree of perfection even common pottery may be carried." The term "common" refers to the material, which was ordinary Lane End marl.

Turner's sons, however, were unfortunate. As we have already mentioned, a great proportion of Turner's business was done in France. Turner *père* had done his business with the Parisians comfortably and satisfactorily. His vases, pot-pourri jars, and chocolate pots made a note of colour in their salons, and chimed in tune with their *îles d'amour*, *bergers* and *bergères*, and Venuses by Boucher and Coustou. They paid him well for them, for—

> Plain Roland still was placidly "inspecting,"
> Not now Camille had stirred the Café Foy;
> Marat was young, and Guillotin dissecting,
> Corday unborn, and Lamballe in Savoie;
> No *faubourg* yet had heard the Tocsin ring:
> This was the summer—when Grasshoppers sing.

But after the elder Turner's death, French money began to

COFFEE-POT, GREY-BLUE JASPER, TURNER
Frank Falkner Collection

TANKARD, ADAMS JASPER
Tunstall Museum

be increasingly difficult to collect. Necker had been dismissed and recalled, the oath had been sworn in the Tennis Court—the Bastille had fallen, and the news of the fall of Verdun had reached Paris. Taking advantage of the stupefaction occasioned by this news, a hideous mob broke into the prisons, and the Assembly was powerless to prevent the massacre of its Aristocratic prisoners. Louis Quinze had publicly sanctioned the acts of the people (not the prison massacres, however), in itself an act of abdication, and returned to Versailles virtually a prisoner, though not yet arrested. At this time the Turners, through the failure of their accounts in Paris, felt the pressing need of money, and it was decided that William should proceed at once to the French capital and collect what he could. As may be supposed, he got nothing. The city was in a state of convulsion, all strangers were objects of suspicion, and Turner was arrested as a spy and consigned to the prison of La Force. Mr. Henry Wedgwood tells us that he was subjected to several examinations, and in dire peril of his life. There is not the faintest doubt that he would have been executed, but for the good offices of the British Ambassador, afterwards Marquis of Stafford, and at that time, we believe, Sir Francis Levison. The ambassador's physician, Dr. James, and the secretaries of the Embassy were using all their efforts to obtain Turner's liberty. It was at length finally accomplished, "and when," says Shaw, in his most stilted manner, "subsequently, the *gen d'armes* brought his passport, he witnessed the infatuation of a bastard freedom, in the most haughty rejection of the doceur Mr. Turner liberally offered to the bearer of so welcome a Document." The Turners, however, were practically ruined. The loss of their best market, together with the impossibility of recovering the large accounts owing

to them, shook the firm to its foundations, and although they dragged on for some years, they were finally compelled to close in 1803.

Among the followers of Wedgwood, the two Mayers, Jos and Elijah, are entitled to an honourable place. Some writers suggest the probability of their descent from the Meir or Mayer family of Cockpit Hill, in Derbyshire. There is not a tittle of evidence to support any such assumption. The probability is rather the reverse. It is far more likely that the Cockpit Hill Meirs emanated from Staffordshire. John Meir, "pott maker," is the first of whom we have any record at Cockpit Hill, and about the same time, or a little earlier, we know that Hugh Mayer was potting at Burslem. Any one who will take the trouble to search the registers in Stoke, Burslem, and Wolstanton, will find more Mayers *and* Meirs than the total of the whole staff employed at Cockpit Hill, even supposing it to be a large pottery, which we know was not the case. Elijah Mayer had a pottery in High Street, Hanley. The date of its establishment is uncertain. In Shaw's time it was carried on by his son, the father "having died many years ago." Some of Elijah Mayer's descendants now living claim that he was descended directly from the Hugh Mayer previously referred to.

According to Shaw, an Elijah Mayer was potting at Red Street "during the early part of the eighteenth century," and that he was the father of the Elijah Mayer who obtained distinction as a follower of Wedgwood. This, together with the date of the son's occupation of High Street Works, would place our Mayer at from five to ten years later than Adams of Greengates. He produced an extensive variety of wares. His Egyptian black was equal, or very little inferior, to Wedgwood's, and its ornamentation sharp and delicate. He had the

JASPER KETTLE, BY NEALE
Hanley Museum

taste to produce perfectly plain wares in basaltes, trusting to the beauty of the body, elegance of form, and the skill of the potter rather than added ornamentation. The sugar-box illustrated at page 296 is a typical example; the body is equal to any of Wedgwood's, the design is satisfactory, and the potting perfect. The amphora in the same illustration is one of the problems which a collector has frequently to solve. It is basaltes, decorated with "encaustic" painting, and is to all appearance a Wedgwood. It was, however, made by Samuel Alcock, probably at his Cobridge works, before he removed to Burslem. He made quantities of ware decorated with Greek figures on various grounds, including black; but the grounds were applied to the surface, and there is no record of his ever making basaltes. The piece is unmarked, but its authenticity is beyond question.

Elijah Mayer made an excellent drab stoneware, and a fine quality of cane colour. A beautiful vase of buff terra-cotta was until recently in the Jermyn Street Museum, but, together with the rest of the pottery there, has been removed elsewhere. Facing page 244 we illustrate a pretty and well-potted basaltes teapot, by Elijah Mayer, with a seated female figure forming the knob of the handle, which, together with its companion Turner vase, was bought at the Mayer sale.

Elijah Mayer made fine cream-coloured dinner ware. It is very similar to Josiah Wedgwood's, not only in the style of potting but the character of the decoration.

Both had enamelled border patterns, some very elaborate and intricate, skilfully executed by hand.

We give an illustration (p. 292) of an interesting pattern or trial plate with four different patterns, evidently intended as a pattern or record for workpeople, also bought at the Mayer sale.

Thomas Mayer occupied the pottery at Cliff Bank, which had been worked by Daniel Bird. He does not seem to have produced anything remarkable, beyond a solid "earthenware table, of truly elegant workmanship." But it is probable that the three brothers Mayer of Dalehall, Jos, Thomas, and John, came of his stock. Jos was a clever potter, and he rivalled Wedgwood in a white ware of unsurpassed colour and texture. Afterwards they took Mr. Liddle Elliot into partnership, and the firm became Mayer Bros. and Elliot, and afterwards Liddle Elliot and Co. Jewitt gives the firm as Liddle, Elliot and Co., but "Liddle" was Elliot's Christian name. This firm made a very good and highly vitreous stoneware. Elijah Mayer married a Miss Mayer of Dalehall (probably a sister of the three brothers), and this goes far to prove that the two families were distinct. Palmer was a good potter, but he unscrupulously pirated Wedgwood's productions. It is said that Voyez worked for Palmer, and went so far as to forge Wedgwood and Bentley's names on the intaglio seals which he made. Palmer's anxiety to follow in Wedgwood's tracks led him to purchase all new patterns as soon as they appeared in Wedgwood's London warehouse. He made basaltes, and, becoming acquainted with Neale, they together imitated many of Wedgwood's processes. The basaltes vase opposite, with hanging wreath and cameo with head of Pallas, is a good example of his work when relying on his own powers, instead of copying Wedgwood. The attenuated foot, however, and the extra "member" on the top combine to produce a peculiar ensemble; but as a piece of potting it is by no means contemptible. It is in the Burslem Museum. Palmer took Neale into partnership about 1776, and the firm was styled Neale and Co. They copied not only Wedgwood, but Adams, and Turner, by the simple device of

BASALTES VASE, PALMER

BASALTES VASE, TURNER

moulding their reliefs and repeating them. Their productions were cleverly made, and some of their vases in granite and cream ware, touched with gold, have a distinct individuality both in form and decoration. One of these is in the South Kensington Museum. They also made a number of large portrait medallions, over 12 inches by 10. One of these, William Penn, was in the Jermyn Street collection, now removed to South Kensington.

Eleven years later Wilson became a partner with Neale; but the firm of Neale and Wilson did not last very long, and C. Wilson succeeded to the business.

The kettle with wicker handle, from the Hanley Museum, is Neale's work, and is of uncommon merit.

Wilson stamped some of his pieces with a crown, over his name. Like many of the smaller makers, he appears to have attempted to vary the Wedgwood method of the superimposition of different bodies. We find examples of black figures on buff grounds, red figures on black, and, in fact, every possible variation.

The jug illustrated at page 252, from the Burslem Museum, is very successful, and has black reliefs, houses, trees, etc., on a red body. It is well made, and the red has a close texture and a fine surface. Of a similar character, but in red altogether, is the jug on the same block. It is a good example of Hollins of Shelton.

Another imitator of Wedgwood was Daniel Steel of Burslem. He is described as making "wares resembling jasper." We have carefully examined the few accessible pieces, and have no hesitation in declaring them a very good resemblance indeed. We illustrate (p. 252) two characteristic pieces of basaltes from the Wedgwood Institute collection, one a cream jug by Birch, and

a covered jug by Keeling and Toft, of Hanley, surmounted, it will be noticed, by the same seated figure as the one which occurs on the teapot by E. Mayer. It would serve no purpose to enumerate the makers of jasper and allied types of ware. No correct list has yet been given, and a selection of names from minor makers is always baffling and misleading—baffling because they are rarely marked, and there is usually some little detail or variation which prevents the enthusiast from labelling them as he would like. Moreover, they often mislead, because, occasionally, we find a small piece by a minor maker equal to anything of the kind made by their more eminent brethren of the craft. We have an example of this in the busts of Shakespere and Mercury (p. 332), which nine collectors out of ten would declare to be by Enoch Wood. They are really by Warburton, who had something to do with the production of the exceedingly fine basaltes coffee-pot. Probably it was produced by Hollins, during the time of his partnership with Warburton.

It is really a difficult matter to draw a rigid line between what is imitative and what is not. The question is complicated by the difficulty of determining the degree of genius required in the artistic treatment and transformation of a plagiarism—in short, to put it baldly, how clever must a thief be to be able to establish a right to the stolen property? It is idle to quote the genius of Shakespere and Handel, and to tell us that the idea was transformed by genius.

The ideas that Shakespere took were often a pretty long series of ideas—as in the cases of the stories from Boccacio and Grammaticus. He took whatever came to his hand, and amplified it. This was the case with Wedgwood. Unlike Shakespere, he really invented nothing. He adapted and

BIRCH KEELING AND TOFT

Burslem Museum

HOLLINS WILSON

Burslem Museum

amplified. He took the technical idea of his bas-reliefs from the Elerses and their school. He took the colour idea of his jasper from classic gems, and the Barberini Vase. It is really astonishing, when one looks carefully through "Hamilton's Vases," and similar works of the period, to find how little original work was produced, and how much was copied.

Even Flaxman, who could design finely, made half a dozen copies for every original panel or vase he modelled for Wedgwood, but it must be remembered that he worked to order. It really, after all, resolves itself into this—that the poor little brainless creatures who narrowed and vulgarised the ideas they seized, are deemed deserving of blame, while the men of brilliant parts, who trick out bravely and worthily their borrowed puppets, are acclaimed of the people. It is, in a sense, right that it should be so, but it makes it difficult to apportion a place to a man like, for instance, Josiah Spode, who was undoubtedly a person of great talent, and possessed of original ideas in plenty; he was nevertheless a most unscrupulous copyist, never hesitating to reproduce anything which came within the sphere of his operations. Spode also made jaspers, sometimes of fair, but more often of middling quality; he made stoneware, good, and sometimes excellent; he made Turner's cane wares; but undoubtedly his best productions were his printed and enamelled wares, which are, at their best, unsurpassed in excellence. The teapot, sugar-box, and cream jug facing page 284 are of buff-ware glazed inside, and enamelled with blue lines. It is an interesting set, and is stamped "Spode." In the Hanley Museum is an almost identical set, stamped "Neale"; the same shape and decoration was made by two or three other contemporaneous makers.

Wedgwood's imitators were not confined to England. He

had many imitators and copyists in France, and three or four of these produced excellent wares. Mr. Jahn has a beautiful ewer and basin made at Sarreguemines. It is original in design and colour—mainly greyish lilacs—and only resembles Wedgwood in the character of the paste and method of manufacture.

Jasper, however, that material or process which Wedgwood undoubtedly originated, has still great possibilities as a process. It is not necessary to perpetuate the old colour schemes, although colour in this material is necessarily restricted. To continue repeating in the twentieth century the pretty, and sometimes petty, classicalities of the "Adams (architectural) period"* is absurd. Let the present Messrs. Wedgwood imitate the enterprise of their distinguished ancestor, and give a commission to some clever young designer in touch with modern thought and feeling, and see what would be the result. We still have an interest in, and value, the more admirable productions of that past time, both for the intrinsic merit which they undoubtedly possessed, and as reflecting the spirit of that time; but, as a vital artistic force the "Adams period" has been long since dead, and decently buried, and it is no longer possible, by any combination of circumstances, to galvanise new life into it.

* The brothers Adam, architects of the mid-eighteenth century—not to be confounded with the Adamses, potters.

CHAPTER XIX

STAFFORDSHIRE FIGURES

THE order of development of the different periods of past art, or, rather, the tendency to a rapid development of the earlier periods, to be followed by a period of gradual decline, has been referred to in a former chapter. This tendency is nowhere more strongly marked than in the case of Staffordshire figure work, which, from the work of Ralph Wood, representing the highest point of achievement in Staffordshire figures, exhibits what is practically an unbroken story of decline.

Staffordshire figures resolve themselves into three distinct classes. The first and most important, but by far the least numerous, of these classes is that of original work produced by modellers possessing considerable artistic power. A characteristic example of this class is the well-known group of the "Vicar and Moses" (illustrated at page 258), by Ralph Wood. The second class, which also includes some characteristic and even valuable pieces, consists of reproductions of well-known statuary in Westminster Abbey and elsewhere, together with imitations, often with considerable variations, of Chelsea and Derby figures.

The third and largest class are the productions of rustics for rustics, made for the decoration of the cottage mantel-shelf and the farmhouse parlour; the work of men with no specially original talent, who obtain their artistic material from wherever

they can, modifying as occasion or fancy dictates. Large numbers of these things were made, of varying degrees of excellence, or the reverse, to be sold at local fairs. Among these were the preternaturally woolly-haired dogs, who usually allocated to themselves the two points of vantage at the extreme corners of the mantel-shelf. There was some form of centre piece, which often represented a castellated building, and was used for the reception of the watch or small clock. There was the tawny lion, which, however, as befitted his rank and dignity as "king of beasts" usually received a greater amount of care and attention in both the modelling and colouring. Dr. Glaisher possesses a specimen in which the treatment of the head and mane curiously suggests the Lion of St. Mark. There were also the spotted "cow" milk and cream jugs, which graced the dresser, and were used on festal occasions. And there were the Toby jugs (also dedicated to festive gatherings), in which the gentleman—one Toby Fillpot or Philpot, "a thirsty old soul as e'er drank a bottle or fathomed a bowl," as the legend runs —is generally represented seated, and occasionally, as is the later example in the British Museum (signed Walton), standing, holding a jug in his hand. There is a seated "Toby," uncoloured, in the Guildhall Museum, a later example, belonging to the earlier years of the nineteenth century, which displays considerable skill in the modelling.

Staffordshire figures are for the most part unmarked. The following potters are, however, known to have produced good figures, and in many instances, from the known character of the work of the various potters, can be identified with tolerable ease: Ralph Wood, (father and son); Whieldon; Aaron Wood; J. Wedgwood; Voyez; J. Neale and Co.; Lakin and Poole; Wood and Caldwell; Turner and Co.; R. Wilson; Bott and Co.;

SALT-GLAZED "AGATE" CAT. HEIGHT $5\frac{1}{8}$ INCHES

JUG, BEAR AND BULLDOG, COLOURED IN ENAMEL. HEIGHT $11\frac{1}{4}$ IN.

Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

J. Lockett; Barker, Sutton and Till; Walton; Edge and Grocott; and J. Dale.

The earliest examples of Staffordshire figure work occur during the "slip" period, when rude figures of animals, birds, etc., were made, and decorated with lines, spots, and splashes of slip, in the manner with which we are familiar in slip wares. These examples are rare. In the exhibition of Staffordshire figures arranged by Mr. Frank Falkner and Dr. Edward J. Sidebotham, at present on view at Peel Park, Salford, is a box in the form of a duck, of buff-coloured clay, and ornamented in a dark brown slip, and a figure of a cat, in stoneware, coated with white and ornamented with spots of brown slip. A money-box and a whistle pot, owned by Dr. Glaisher, may be mentioned in this connection; the money-box having five birds on the top, with a row of sixteen young ones round the side, the whistle having a large bird seated on the top with a young one on its back, in the midst of a group of five or six other young ones (page 36).

Contemporary with the slip period are the agate figures, which are formed by the process of mixing different coloured clays, which process was brought to perfection by Whieldon and Wedgwood. Of these, very few exist. Several cats appear in the exhibition above mentioned, together with a figure of a woman, or child, it is difficult to say which, the character is so extremely archaic. The splendid cat illustrated from Dr. Glaisher's collection is of salt-glazed agate. Two other examples (not nearly so fine) are in the Schreiber collection: examples also appear in the collection of Mr. Frank Falkner and Dr. Sidebotham. They are, however, very rare.

At a somewhat later period figures were made with a deep red clay introduced, in addition to the buff clay, and upon which, occasionally, are spots or drops of white slip; an example of

this is the little figure of the piper with wig, which appears in the South Kensington collection and also in that of Mrs. W. S. Salting, now on loan at Bethnal Green. In the last-named collection is also a figure of an arquebusier on horseback, in which the modelled and coloured treatment are similar (a certain convention being adopted which is exceedingly good), and evidently by the same hand as the before-mentioned example.

These figures have been attributed with considerable degree of probability to the elder Astbury, 1736-1743. They are generally small, being rarely more than six inches in height.

In the exhibition above referred to at Salford are figures of a standing piper, splashed with green and brown, six inches; a figure of a cobbler, seated, five inches; and a figure of a merry Andrew, six inches, all made of two different coloured clays, and by the same maker.

Salt-glazed figures have already been referred to in the chapter on Salt-Glaze.

During the so-called early Whieldon period a number of figures were made, glazed and splashed in the tortoise-shell manner initiated by that potter. These figures exhibit considerable spirit in the modelling, up to the point to which they are carried, which is never very far, the figures being small in size. Among the most successful of these are—a figure of a poet, in doublet and hose, with a long, flowing mantle, six inches; and a figure of an actor, also in flowing mantle, with his right hand resting on his belt, five and a half inches.

There is also a figure of a rhinoceros with a man on his back, coloured with brown and blue glazings, but differing entirely from the salt-glazed group referred to in the chapter on Salt-Glaze.

The earliest known Staffordshire figure-modeller who signed his productions was Ralph Wood, of Burslem, who was born in

THE VICAR AND "MOSES," BY RALPH WOOD. HEIGHT $9\frac{1}{2}$ INCHES
South Kensington Museum

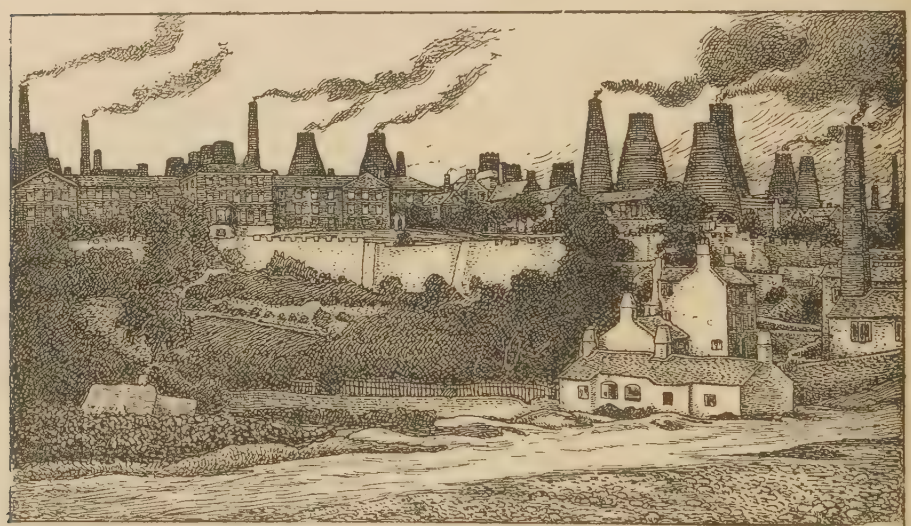
1716, and died in 1772. The group of the Vicar and "Moses," by which he is best known, is a humorous representation of a somnolent vicar in his pulpit, with his clerk below. It shows considerable skill in the modelling, and exceptional power in the delineation of character. The colouring is quiet and restrained. There are, however, in various collections a large number of inferior versions of this piece, made by Ralph Wood's successors, modelled in a weaker manner, and coloured in enamel colour of garish and unpleasant hues. The group illustrated at page 268, of the parson and his clerk returning home after a carousal, is of a more recent date. It is ascribed by some to the son of Ralph Wood, and by others to William Adams, of the Brick House Works. It is, however, copied from a Chelsea-Derby model, and should not without reservation be attributed to any particular Staffordshire potter.

Other figures by Ralph Wood are—Old Age, a beggar leaning upon two sticks, marked R. Wood, nine inches (South Kensington Museum); a pair of figures (the Haymakers), representing a young man with a scythe, and a woman with a barrel, marked R. Wood, seven and three-quarter inches; figures of a "Sportsman" and Bag-piper (British Museum), seven and three-quarter inches.

In the Falkner and Sidebotham collection above referred to is a remarkable Toby jug by Ralph Wood. The gentleman is seated holding a jug in his left hand upon his knee, with pipe in the other hand. There is a curious arrangement of a cartouche forming the side of the seat, upon which is inscribed: "It is all out, then fill him again."

The examples of ideal and symbolic figures, by Ralph Wood and his school, and later by Neale and Co., may be described as instances of mistaken industry. The prattlings of children are

always delightful when confined to subjects or events which come within their own necessarily limited experience. The ideal can only be comprehended or reached, by careful education, and by an experience which is complete. This was not possible to the early Staffordshire figure-modeller, who had established no tradition, and possessed no opportunities for the acquisition of the kind of knowledge necessary to the treatment of the nude.



RALPH WOOD'S WORKS AT BURSLEM, ABOUT 1850

Ruskin in his "Ariadne Florentina" points out a similar lapse in the case of a far better equipped artist than any of the Staffordshire figure-modellers—Thomas Bewick—and draws a comparison between a symbolic figure by Bewick and the treatment of a similar subject by an early Italian artist, much to the disadvantage of the former. A man may build an exceedingly picturesque cottage, and fail utterly with a Parthenon, or even in the proper treatment of a classic doorway.

The class of figures referred to are those of Neptune and

Venus and similar figures by Ralph Wood, and the figure of Diana and others by Neale and Co.*

Among the earlier Staffordshire figure work possessing exceptional merit may be mentioned a figure of Falstaff in the act of drawing his sword (the subject of Falstaff was treated later, copied, however, from the Derby model, with crude colouring in enamel and the modelling of a coarser character); a group of a shepherd with pipe and dog, and shepherdess, with two lambs, at the foot; a small figure of a girl with white cap, holding a basket of fruit, exceedingly good both in modelling and colour; a jug formed of an elephant, with a castle on its back, upon which is seated a monkey forming the knob of the cover, with two serpents for the handle of the jug. The general treatment of this piece is exceedingly fine, the character recalling Oriental work.

The early Staffordshire figures are coloured in under-glaze pigment (it was not until later, towards the close of the eighteenth century, that enamel colours began to be employed); the prevailing colours are manganese, a copper green, a yellowish orange, brown, and black; there were, however, variations of these colours, obtained by mixing two and occasionally three colours together, producing a very satisfactory low-toned colour effect.

There are also, in various collections, a series of drinking cups or jugs, of various sizes, formed of the heads of smiling satyrs, bearded, garlanded with the vine. These cups bear a

* Mr. Frank Falkner, to whom the authors are indebted for having read the proofs of this chapter, and for several valuable suggestions, thinks the above remarks a little too severe as applied to the work of Ralph Wood, and refers to the group of Hudibras on horseback as an example in support of his view. The Hudibras is certainly fine in treatment. The above remarks, however, apply only to the treatment of the *nude*, which requires a special knowledge and training, which were simply inaccessible to the early Staffordshire figure-modeller.

strong family likeness ; they vary in unimportant particulars, but are evidently all inspired by the same classic originals of bronze.

In the Bethnal Green Museum is an extraordinary jug representing a nude Bacchus seated upon a cask, holding a cornucopia from which issues a dolphin forming the spout. The handle is formed by a monkey having an ornamental termination which rests upon the shoulders of the god. On the reverse side of the jug is a large figure of an infant satyr, with panpipes in one hand, and in the other a goblet. Although the piece exhibits some skill of modelling, it also represents the most extreme incongruity of idea, and confusion of decorative motif.

"Bear" jugs are large vessels of brown, black, or white stoneware representing a bear seated upon its haunches, having a collar and muzzle, to which is attached a chain. The removable head forms a cup from which to drink, a tap occasionally being placed in a suitable position. These vessels invariably formed part of the properties of country inns and beerhouses during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The brown varieties may usually be assigned to Nottingham, but many, both white and coloured ones, were made in Staffordshire. The amusing example in white ware given opposite, is from Dr. Glaisher's collection at Cambridge, and is a variation of the stereotyped upright form. It is most certainly Staffordshire.

The second period of Staffordshire figures presents two differences from that of the earlier and more interesting period which we have been considering. First, originality of conception disappears, and its place is taken by reproductions, more or less exact, of existing work. The second variation is in the colouring, in which enamel colours take the place of those of the more satisfactory under-glaze.

Notwithstanding this decline in these two important particulars, some of these pieces possess considerable interest and value from the skill displayed in their modelling.

Among the most important examples may be mentioned the two figures of "Prudence" and "Fortitude," twenty-one inches

VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A BEAR, HEIGHT 10½ INCHES
From the collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

high, illustrations being given from the examples in Dr. Glaisher's collection at Cambridge. The colouring, although in enamels, is not obtrusive, and the diapered patterns on the dresses are well painted. They form an extremely handsome pair of figures. Of a similar character is the figure of Milton, of which both the modelling and colouring are extremely good.

These are probably by Wedgwood, who in his earlier years made a number of figures which are not marked, and of which there is no record. Miss Meteyard mentions Theodore Parker as having modelled in 1769 figures of "Prudence," "Milton," "Shakespeare," and others. The statuette of Van Dyck, the original model of which is in the Soane Museum, is a very fine example of this great potter's work.

In the Glaisher collection is an interesting group of two figures representing the "Assassination of Marat by Charlotte Corday of Caen, in Normandy, 1793." Marat is in a prone position on the ground, having been stabbed to the heart by the knife which Charlotte Corday (who is represented as standing) is holding in her hand. The blood (of a bright orange) has trickled from the wound down the waistcoat to the ground. This piece bears the same stamp of originality as the early Staffordshire figures, and is marked Lakin and Poole. By the same makers is a group of Cephalus and Procris, beautifully modelled and rare. An example is, or was until recently, in the hands of a dealer in Wardour Street.

Figures of lions, with forepaw resting upon a globe, appear in many collections, and were made both by Wedgwood and other potters. They were coloured in enamels, more or less naturally, with marbled plinth. They bear a strong family likeness, and exhibit variations of one classic original—that on the steps of the Loggia dei Lanzi at Florence. The example given in the illustration facing page 340 is one of the best we have seen.

A large number of busts were produced during the eighteenth and earlier part of the nineteenth centuries. These include representations of Wesley, Whitfield, Shakespeare, Milton, Napoleon, Frederick the Great, Handel, and many others. The bust of Wesley by Enoch Wood is a most admirable

FIGURES OF "PRUDENCE" AND "FORTITUDE," WEDGWOOD. HEIGHT 21 INCHES
Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

piece of modelling, and that of Whitfield, by the same potter, is a fine work of art, without reservations of any kind.

We must not forget the very remarkable basaltes figures of Wedgwood. These are all well, and many of them exquisitely, modelled. In the Hanley Museum is a statuette of J. J. Rousseau as a botanist. This beautiful figure bears the same relation to contemporary statuary as Meissonier's pictures do to contemporary painting. It has all and more of the delicacy of the jasper bas-reliefs, together with the breadth of a life-sized statue. The modeller is apparently unknown. A similar figure, also black basaltes, almost as fine as the Rousseau, by an unknown maker, is in the Burslem Museum. It is a statuette of Admiral Rodney, and is about eight inches high. Wedgwood produced many life-size busts in basaltes, portraits of contemporary notabilities, as well as admirable reproductions from the antique. Among the latter may be cited an admirable bust of Mercury, and a fine Minerva.

Among the most remarkable productions of the Staffordshire potter are the portraits of the preachers Charles and John Wesley, and Whitfield. Wesleyan Methodism received a strong impetus from John Wesley's visit to Staffordshire. The window from which he preached at The Foley is still pointed out, and in many of the cottages busts of John Wesley may be seen in the windows and fanlights over the doors, mostly, alas! degenerate and modern. But after his visit nearly every potter strove to produce mementoes of the great preacher.

Methodist collectors possess an amazing number and variety of busts and figures of Wesley. Mr. Thursfield Smith, of Whitchurch, has a striking collection, and Mr. J. G. Wright, of Wolverhampton, possesses over four hundred portraits,

including busts, Wedgwood medallions, and printed plates, together with the superb bust after Roubiliac.

The notorious "Rush" murders of Stanfeld Hall, some fifty years ago, provided the Staffordshire figure-maker with a subject for his craft. A farmer named Rush, of Potash Farm, on the Stanfeld estate, murdered his landlord, together with several members of his family. He was identified, and apprehended through the instrumentality of his sweetheart, Emily Sandford, and was hanged in front of Norwich Castle, the last public execution there. Figures of Rush and his sweetheart and models of Potash Farm and Stanfeld Hall are in the collection of Prince Frederick Duleep Singh. A model of Norwich Castle also exists, but is extremely rare. In the same collection is a "cow" milk jug, used at the Lopham dinners, and a figure of J. J. Gurney.

The two interesting and curious inkstands facing page 268 are the portraits of the manufacturer, John Ridgway, and his wife. These are of earthenware, coloured in enamel, and must be rare; none of the Staffordshire museums possess examples, with the exception of Hanley, which has a copy of John Ridgway, but not of his wife. There is an example of Mrs. Ridgway in the South Kensington collection, but it is buff stoneware, and the authorities are apparently unable to identify the piece as being the representation of any particular individual, or as the work of any particular potter. Mr. Jahn informs us that certain members of the Ridgway family bought up all the inkstands they could meet with, and destroyed them because they were such good caricatures.

About the year 1838 Mr. Herbert Minton experimented in the making of China figures in emulation of Sèvres, and an able painter of the name of Steele, among others, was engaged from

THE ASSASSINATION OF MARAT BY CHARLOTTE CORDAY
POOLE AND LAKIN. HEIGHT $13\frac{3}{4}$ INCHES

STATUETTE OF MILTON, WEDGWOOD
HEIGHT $18\frac{3}{4}$ INCHES

Collection of Dr. J. W. L. Glaisher

the Royal Derby Pottery specially to paint the figures. The two little figures seen at page 308 were given by Mr. Minton to the grandmother of the present writers. The modelling of the figures is good, and the painted patterns, which, however, are somewhat obscured in the illustration, are in all respects equal to Sèvres work.

In 1845 commenced the parian business, of which the real invention or authorship has been disputed; both Minton's and Copeland's producing similar results about the same time.

This new body completely eclipsed the manufacture of figures in any other material than parian, or porcelain statuary, as Copeland's named it. The latter firm executed many excellent statuettes, groups, and busts in parian, remarkable for their careful modelling and high finish. Many of the busts were life-size, and exhibited, we think, more artistic merit than the groups, which were mainly copies of the work of mid-Victorian sculptors. There were many examples of Foley, Gibson, Westmacot, Chantrey, and Bell. The copies are so good, and the material so appropriate, that it is a matter for some regret that Messrs. Copeland did not further develop the manufacture of parian statuary by the adoption of the more virile models of the more capable modern sculptors. The idea prevails that parian has "gone out of fashion." Is it not rather the fact that the models are obsolete, and that the manufacturers decline to incur the expense of commissioning able sculptors to make fresh models? The description written by Charles Dickens of his visit to Copeland's works is so spirited that we may be excused a quotation from it. "Further, you learnt—you know you did—in the same visit, how the beautiful sculptures in the delicate new material called parian are all constructed in moulds; how, into that material, animal bones are ground up, because

the phosphates of lime contained in bones makes it translucent" (this is a mistake, dear master-worker—the only one in your article, which is amazingly accurate otherwise. The bones are used in *china*; in parian, felspar is substituted, and this constitutes the difference between the two bodies); "how everything is moulded, before going into the fire, one-fourth larger than it is intended to come out of the fire, because it shrinks in that proportion in the intense heat; how, when a figure shrinks unequally, it is spoiled—emerging from the furnace a misshapen birth; a big head and a little body, or a little head and a big body, or a Quasimodo with long arms and short legs, or a Miss Biffin with neither legs nor arms worth mentioning."

Minton's, in their parian statuary, relied chiefly on models from foreign sculptors, such as Carrier-Belleuse, Protat, and others mentioned in another chapter, and the decline in this branch of their *fabrique* may also be attributed to the out-of-date character of their models, excellent as they are of their kind. The firm of William Brownfield and Sons, no longer in existence, can hardly be passed over in this connection, as they produced many notable examples of parian statuary, modelled principally by foreign sculptors of high repute, including Carrier-Belleuse and Protat, already mentioned. This firm produced a large vase, the model of which was fifteen feet high. The modeller was Carrier-Belleuse, and the material parian. This vase may well be included in this subject, as the globe of which the vase was composed stood on a plinth encircled with Cupids in high relief. Round the centre of the globe was a zone with four brackets, on which were four groups representing the Seasons. The cover was surmounted with a statuette of Ceres, some three feet high. The modelling was executed with Carrier-Belleuse's well-known dexterity, but it was chiefly remarkable as a *tour*

BUSTS OF MILTON, MERCURY, AND NEPTUNE, AND GROUP OF VICAR AND CLERK
Tunstall Museum

INKSTANDS: PORTRAITS OF JOHN RIDGWAY AND HIS WIFE. HEIGHT $3\frac{1}{2}$ AND 2 INCHES
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

de force of ceramic technique. It was exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1888, and destroyed in a fire which broke out at the manufactory some two years later.

Those of our readers who are specially interested in the subject of old Staffordshire figures may be referred to the excellent illustrated catalogue which has been issued of the collection mentioned earlier in this chapter at Peel Park, Salford.

CHAPTER XX

LUSTRED WARES

THE practice of applying to pottery a thin film, or coating, of some metallic oxide for the purpose of increased brilliancy, although brought to its highest perfection in the bottegas of Malaga and Gubbio in the fifteenth century, probably dates from a much earlier period. The earliest known lustred pottery is that found on the ruins of Rhages and other ancient cities of Persia. Sir R. Murdock Smith affirms that some of the fragments unearthed date possibly from several centuries before the Christian era. A traveller in Spain who wrote in the year 1350 states that at "Malaga the beautiful gilt pottery is made, which is exported to the most distant countries." It was the principal method employed by the Moors in Spain for the decoration of their pottery, and in Italy the process was still further developed, principally, however, by the Maestro Giorgio Andreoli at Gubbio.

The Gubbio lustre was, in the finest examples, employed as an enrichment to *portions only* of the ware—never, we may say, over the whole field—to form the highest lights of a subject, or over a particular colour (such as orange) for the purpose of producing a different *quality*, or an added richness of effect. In some instances, as in a vase at South Kensington by Maestro Giorgio, it was employed as a background (gold lustre) to figures painted in blue.

JUG, SILVER "RESIST" LUSTRE. WEDGWOOD
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

COPPER LUSTRE JUGS
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

LUSTRED WARES

The enrichment of the most important parts of a piece is doubtless the true method of employing lustre—as representing the most precious embellishment, or as focussing the highest interest of the piece.

It may be said to be somewhat of a far cry from the lustres of Gubbio, flashing their brilliant iridescence at every angle, as the light plays upon the surface, burning with an *inner light* which is at the same time full of the most gorgeous colour, and the modest lustre wares of Staffordshire, intended to serve as articles of the commonest daily use, and made for the most part by rustics having no tradition, and possessing no learning. These, however, are now having some vogue amongst collectors; moreover some pieces possess considerable artistic merit, and may therefore be said to claim some notice here.

Lustred wares in this country appear to have been made almost simultaneously in Staffordshire, at Newcastle and Sunderland, and at Brislington near Bristol, from about the year 1770 onwards; the high-water mark of the industry being about the close of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century. Professor Church states that Wedgwood obtained some information upon the subject from Dr. John Fothergill, F.R.S., as early as the year 1776.

According to Shaw, John Hancock, of Etruria, is the person who is generally credited with having first produced bronze lustre in Staffordshire. Hancock appears to have been somewhat indifferent to monetary considerations, since he is described as having sold his recipe indiscriminately for various small sums, the natural result being to produce a great increase in this kind of ware.

In 1846 Hancock wrote to the "Staffordshire Mercury":

"In the notice of the death of Mr. John Booth, of Well St., inserted in your last week's paper, it is stated that he was the inventor of lustre for earthenware. I beg to state that this is incorrect, as I was the original inventor of lustre, which is recorded in several works on Potting, and I first put it in practice at Mr. Spode's manufactory for Messrs. Daniel and Brown, and continued to make it long before Mr. Booth or any other person attempted to do so. . . . By inserting this you will oblige me, whose character . . . at the age of eighty-nine, is at stake.

"JOHN HANCOCK, *Etruria*."

Shaw's own description of the various lustres may be given.

"The lustre of our day is a good red clay body, with a fine brown glaze, upon which is laid, for gold lustre, a very thin coating of a chemical mixture containing a small quantity of gold in solution—also of copper, for copper lustre. The steel lustre employs oxide of platinum in the same mixture instead of gold; and when silver lustre is made, a further coating of platinum worked in water only is laid on the steel lustre. The ware is then fired, and will be good or bad as the glaze and the metals are so. The first maker of the silver lustre properly so-called was Mr. John Gardner (now employed by J. Spode, Esq.) when employed by the late Mr. Woolfe of Stoke; and the next were Mr. G. Sparkes, of Slack Lane, Hanley; and Mr. Horobin, of Tunstall (now of Lane End). A person named Mr. John Ainsley, recently dead, introduced it at Lane End; and since 1804 it has been practised with varied success through the whole of the district. The gold lustre is regarded as having been first produced by a Burslem artist named Hennys, then resident

in London, where for some years he thus ornamented the chalk body-ware made by Mr. Wilson of Hanley. This lustre is the *solid* kind. The method of preparing a gold lustre which could be applied by the pencil is very different every way, and was discovered by Mr. James Daniel, of Pleasant Row, Stoke."

The various kinds of Staffordshire lustred wares, then, are as follows :

1. Plain silver or platinum lustre made to imitate, or to produce the effect of, old English silver or plate, in which the lustre necessarily covers the whole field of the piece. This must be accounted one of the least satisfactory forms of Staffordshire lustre wares ; it is an instance of the preference of the Staffordshire man for imitation, rather than for the cultivation of his inventive faculties. No connoisseur of English plate is likely to be deceived by such imitations, and to those possessing less expert knowledge the feeling, upon the discovery of the imitation, is something akin to resentment of the fraud ; although, no doubt, the intention is not so much to deceive as to present what may be called a "similitude." Moreover, all imitations of a particular art or process in a different material are reprehensible. Further, the dead evenness of the lustre itself is a monotony, possessing nothing of that constant change, observable in the lustres of the fine periods, which is due to the play of light upon their surface.

2. Plain copper lustre, in which a dark warm-coloured body is employed as a groundwork for the purpose of enhancing its depth and brilliancy. This variety is open to the same objection as the first, and for similar reasons. This, too, possesses no iridescence, but presents the same dead evenness of surface.

3. Relief wares, in which the raised portions are lustred usually with copper lustre, but occasionally with lustre having

a purple, pink, or violet hue. In some cases lustre is introduced in conjunction with various bright-colour pigments.

4. Painted patterns, views, etc., in lustre upon a light ground.

5. Painted patterns in lustre (usually copper) upon a ground of a different colour, such as a dark blue.

6. Patterns which are produced by means of what is called a "resist," *i.e.* the pattern is painted on the ware with a stencil composed chiefly of a substance easily soluble in water, such as sugar, and (at a later period) glycerine, with an affinity for humidity. The whole pattern is lustred over, and allowed to partially dry. The ware is washed in water. The resinous vehicle carrying the lustre, "resists" the water and is unaffected by it, but the stencilled part washes off in flakes exactly the shape of the pattern, leaving it white on a lustred ground.

These "resist" patterns are usually in silver or platinum, but may also be in other coloured lustre, and they are by far the most interesting and satisfactory of the different Staffordshire lustred wares. The ornament, though presenting little variation in design, is of that character which is most easily produced by the free sweep of the brush, the finer tendrils of the ornamentation being afterwards drawn with a pointed tool or sharpened stick.

Lustred wares are not well represented in the London museums. The finest pieces may be said to be owned by private persons, although there are many interesting examples in the Hanley and Burslem Museums, including several pieces of silver lustre by Wedgwood. Hancock was employed at the Etruria works, probably in the production of this lustre. A coffee-pot, with the well-known "Gipsy" knob, marked "Wedgwood," is in the Victoria and Albert Museum; and a good number of Wedgwood pieces are scattered over the country. The Hanley Wilsons, who pirated Wedgwood's jasper, also imitated his

LUSTRE JUG, WITH FINELY ENAMELLED FIGURES

LUSTRE JUG, MODELLED IN HIGH RELIEF

Hanley Museum

PERFORATED FRUIT-BASKET, DECORATED ON THE BASE WITH LANDSCAPE PAINTED IN BLACK AND GREY. LILAC LUSTRE WITH "RESIST" PATTERN

Hanley Museum

LUSTRE VASE, WILSON SCHOOL

Jahn Collection

lustre, as the coffee-pot mentioned, with the figure on the lid, exists in several private collections and public museums, bearing the Wilsons' stamp. A patent was taken out in 1810 by Peter Warburton, of Lane End, "for decorating china, porcelain, earthenware and glass with native pine, or adulterated gold, silver, platina or other metals, fluxed or lowered with lead or any other substance, which invention, a new method, leaves the metals after being burned in their metallic state." Warburton's works closed in 1825, and specimens of their make are rare. Bailey and Batkin, of Longton, were the first to make lustre wares on any large scale. Their productions were chiefly silver lustre, but they also made bronze and "gold" lustred wares as well as "resist" lustre. At least half a dozen other Longton manufacturers made lustre at this period, or a little later. Chief among these were J. Lockett and Sons (who continue its manufacture to the present day), Mayer and Newbold, and Bailey and Co. A few years later (between 1830 and 1850) Messrs. C. Allerton and Sons and Mr. J. F. Wileman also made lustre ware, the former firm still continuing its manufacture. Most prominent firms in the Potteries appear to have made incidental experiments in this class of ware. There are pieces extant marked Mayer, Minton, Meigh, Copeland and Garrett, and E. Wood. In the Hanley Museum is a magnificent bust of George Whitfield, finely modelled, and lustred over to imitate bronze. Though the attempt to imitate metal is in itself banal, the imitation is exceedingly clever. The lustre is dulled slightly (perhaps this is a contradiction in terms, but the "lustring" process is employed), and the effect is exactly that of bronze. Lustres have been produced at various Yorkshire potteries, at Swansea, and at the Herculaneum Pottery at Liverpool. But it is not difficult to identify the Staffordshire makes. Every possible kind of ware has been decorated with

"lustre." Besides articles of domestic use, statuettes, busts, pipes, fonts, goblets and tankards, and communion services and chalices exist.

Ralph Salt, of Hanley, made numbers of figures and groups between 1830 and 1840, and Mayer, Edwards, and Cork, and Edge, all of Dalehall; Till of the Sytch, Burslem; and Beech and Hancock, of Tunstall, made lustre ware in fair quantities. Of these, only Mayer was in the habit of marking his ware. Altogether, "resist" lustre is the most artistic type of this class of ware, which perhaps accounts for its rising vogue among collectors. Another reason possibly is that it is no longer made; and any piece discovered is likely to be at least fifty years old, as its manufacture has been discontinued for quite that period.

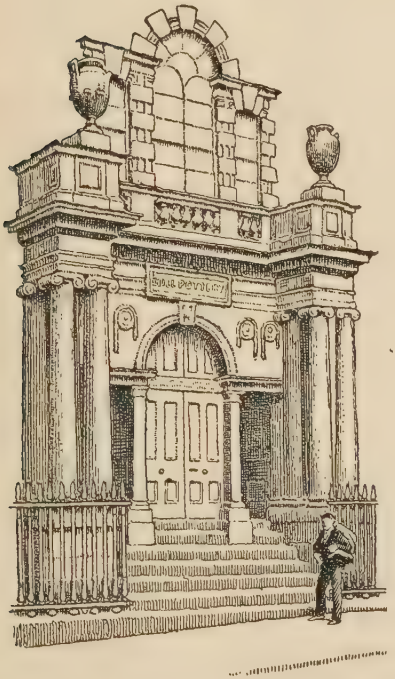
Whether its growing popularity will tempt the forger to its imitation, as has been the case with other kinds of "old ware," remains to be seen. Plain silver lustres are now being made commercially, and we have seen pieces which we know to be modern (and not manufactured for the purpose of deception) in curiosity shops, and offered as old examples.

It behoves the collector, therefore, to keep a wary eye on "resist" wares.

It is a matter of some regret that such a sumptuous form of enrichment as lustre should have been allowed to fall into desuetude. Attempts have indeed been made, outside the Potteries, however, and mainly by isolated individuals, to revive this form of decoration, notably in the case of Mr. William de Morgan, at Chelsea, with conspicuous success. Messrs. Maw and Co. have also employed this process with some success in their tile work.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BIRTH OF THE VICTORIAN POTTERIES



PORTICO OF HILL POTTERY, BURSLEM

THE close of the eighteenth century witnessed the first experiments in the manufacture of Staffordshire porcelain, the beginning of the nineteenth its development, and the early Victorian era its highest point of achievement. Anything like a complete account of its evolution, of the methods and materials adopted or discarded, the changes in its composition, and its final resolution into a national, or even a local material or fabrique, would require the compass of a full volume. Josiah Spode the second is generally credited with the introduction of bone, the material which gives a specific character to English porcelain. But bones had been used in an incidental and sporadic fashion at Bow, Chelsea, and Worcester thirty or forty years previously. Pennington, of Liverpool, used bone ash in 1769; and in 1748 T. Frye took out a patent for a body containing "the calcination of certain animals, minerals, and fossils."

Enoch Wood, too, in a letter dated September 26, 1826, says, "I was the first person that made use of bone *in earthenware*, when in my apprenticeship at Mr. Palmer's, at Hanley Green." Spode, therefore, was not the first to use bone, even in Staffordshire. It is not certain that he determined the right proportion of his ingredients. The men who ascertained the true degree of density or vitreosity by adding or deleting "that other ounce," are unknown or forgotten. Even Dr. Johnson may have contributed something to the art of potting, though his efforts in that direction are generally spoken of with derision. Darwin tells us that the traits, whims, or passions of long-buried ancestors often lie dormant, generation after generation, suddenly flashing to life, apparently without rule or reason, in some particular person. Surely this must have been the old Doctor's case when he conceived the idea that he was capable of improving the manufacture of china.

Some potter ancestor, unknown and undiscoverable, must have stretched a ghostly finger from his forgotten grave, and touched some fibre of old Samuel's brain, or he surely would not have persuaded the directors of the Chelsea factory to place it at his disposal * (which, strangely enough, they did) so that he could make his experiments. How unfortunate it is that these experiments are not recorded! We are only told that they resulted in ludicrous failure. Even Bozzy is silent concerning it. He tells us, indeed, of their visit to the Derby China Works in 1777, when Johnson complained that the price asked was greater than the same articles would have been if made in silver.

Johnson's Staffordshire strain is again apparent in his weakness for teapots; some of those he possessed holding two and three quarts.

* Falkner's "History of Chelsea."

At this time Richard Champion was working the Castle Green factory in Bristol, with intervals of electioneering and political propagandism on behalf of Burke, then parliamentary candidate for that city.

Champion was not likely to have had any strong bias in favour of the Staffordshire potters, for we find in 1775 a powerful contingent of Staffordshire potters, headed by Josiah Wedgwood and John Turner, opposing his petition to Parliament for a ten years' extension of Cookworthy's patent.*

Although Earl Gower exercised his powerful aid and influence on behalf of the Staffordshire men, when the Bill was introduced in the Lords, Champion obtained his extension. In 1777 he sold his patent to a syndicate of Staffordshire manufacturers, consisting of Samuel Hollins, Anthony Keeling, John Turner, Jacob Warburton, William Clowes, and Charles Bagnall. "After this agreement," says Shaw, "Mr. Champion directed the processes of the manufacture for the company at the manufactory of Mr. Anthony Keeling, at Tunstall"; but Champion's biographer, Mr. Hugh Owen, proves that he took no part whatever in the management. He certainly came to Staffordshire, no doubt for the purpose of completing the agreement, and he appears to have resided in Newcastle until the formation of the Rockingham Ministry in 1782, when Burke rewarded him for his political services by the appointment of "Deputy-Paymaster to the Forces." His enjoyment of the post, however, like the Ministry, was short-lived, and he moved to South Carolina, where he died a few years later. In the meantime, owing to a

* William Cookworthy was an apothecary, who in 1768 took out a patent for the making of true porcelain, and started a manufactory at Coxside, Plymouth; this patent practically confining the china clay and china stone to one monopolist.

disagreement which arose in the syndicate, Keeling and Turner withdrew. The remaining partners engaged as manager Mr. John Daniel (son of the Ralph Daniel who introduced plaster moulds), and established their pottery at the New Hall, Shelton. Here, Shaw says, "during the lifetime of the several partners, the concern has been carried forward to their great profit." Mr. Hobson, of the British Museum, says, "With the closing of Champion's Bristol factory the history of true porcelain in this country is practically ended. The Staffordshire company which bought Champion's patent would seem to have made little or no porcelain on the Bristol lines, but rather to have used their privileges for the purposes of trading in the raw materials." The first portion of the quotation is scarcely debatable. It is splitting split hairs to assert that the introduction of calcined bones makes an artificial paste, and with the opinions of Messrs. Arnoux and Brongniart on record, no expression of opinion on our part is needed. With reference to the statement that the New Hall Works made little or no porcelain on the Bristol lines, but chiefly traded in the raw materials, there is abundant evidence to show that the statement is entirely erroneous.

The new material, petunse—petun-tse—or felspar, was confined for a time to the company by Act of Parliament, and they certainly supplied other potters with this material from their mill, just as potters do to-day. But they made the distinct condition that it was only to be used in "opacous glazes," and the clay in opaque pottery; and the ground stone was not to be used in the glaze of a *transparent* body. Every potter is aware that a mill attached to a large factory is usefully employed in grinding materials for smaller potteries not equipped with a mill; not for the sake of profit alone, but to keep pans occupied which otherwise would be running empty from time

TEAPOT AND SLOP BOWL, WITH FINE ENAMELLED FIGURE SUBJECTS. NEW HALL
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

to time, thus involving a waste of "power," and also loss of labour.

The New Hall Pottery was, for its time, a large works, having five ovens, and it is quite impossible that it would keep working until 1825 and make "little or no porcelain." As a matter of fact, they made nothing else. Bones were not introduced until 1820, so that even the phrase "on the Bristol lines" cannot be regarded as a saving clause. Certainly a large quantity of white ware was made at the New Hall to be sold to decorators. Jewitt says that both Henry Bone (afterwards R.A.) and an accomplished French painter named Duvivier were employed at the New Hall Works; we know that Bone purchased quantities of New Hall ware when in Bristol and London, and had it conveyed in hampers strapped on the backs of pack horses or mules. Bone's biographer, however, Mr. Hugh Owen, proves conclusively that Bone never visited the Potteries. It is known that other decorators purchased ware, and paid for it in work, and although certain writers say the decorations were "crude and clumsy," it is impossible that they could have been crude and clumsy if they had no existence. The accompanying illustrations of a portion of a large tea service belonging to Mr. G. W. Rhead, senior, of Clayton, will show that the decorations were not always either crude or clumsy. Mr. John Daniel was Mr. Rhead's great-uncle, and this set has never been out of the family. It is a large service consisting of forty-five pieces.

It is, of course, quite possible that it does not represent the ordinary type of decoration produced by the company, and that it was executed for the private use of one of the principals. It is not known who painted the flowers, but the figure panels are most probably the work of Joshua Christall, who served his apprenticeship to John Davenport, and afterwards became

President of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours. Christall may have been specially commissioned to paint this service as a *tour de force*, or he may have done it in payment for ware. It, however, only needs to be compared with any of his known work to prove its authenticity, especially as there was no other figure painter in the Potteries at that period capable of doing work of its peculiar quality. The flowers are excellent, and the quality of the gilding is a proof that the decorators were capable and skilful.

It is significant, too, that the centre bands of the panels are embellished with slightly raised spots. This process of raising was introduced by Henry Daniel, Spode's enameller, in 1802, the son of the Daniel who was manager at New Hall, which works was finally closed in 1825. It is very difficult to identify New Hall china, owing to their habit of rarely marking their wares. In these rare cases it was marked with the letter N incised. Their large sale of white ware would partially account for this. In 1800 the second Josiah Spode began to make china. Thomas Minton had commenced the manufacture of a kind of semi-transparent porcelain, but it was abandoned in 1811, and John Davenport had made a trip to France prior to 1800 to study the French methods of making porcelain, with the result that he produced a body superior to anything then made in England. John Ridgway also, in 1815, made a bone china body of excellent quality, and the enterprising opposition of these energetic manufacturers would easily account for the decline of the New Hall Works.

We have already dealt with some of the productions of the first Josiah Spode, whose labours in the establishment of his business cannot be ignored.

Jewitt was fortunate in the acquisition of a number of

Whieldon documents, and among these are a series of very interesting entries in Whieldon's handwriting. One dated April 9, 1749, says :

" Hired Siah Spoade to give him from this time to Martlemas next *2s. 3d.*, or *2s. 6d.* if he deserves it.

	s.	*d.*
2[n] year.	2	9
3[rd] „	3	3
p[d] full earnest	1	0

" Siah " appears to have deserved it, for we find in 1752, under date February 22 :

	s.	*d.*
Hired Josiah Spoad for next Martlemas per week . .	7	0
I am to give him earnest	5	0
p[d] in part	1	0
p[d] in part	4	0

Josiah by this time is advancing not only in financial matters, but in reputation, for in 1754 we find Whieldon :

Feb. 25th :	£	*s.*	*d.*
Hired Siah Spode per week		7	0
Earnest.	1	11	6
Paid in part		16	0

This substantial improvement in " Siah's " prospects appears to have determined him to take the serious step of matrimony, which he did about this time. So far as can be gathered, Spode worked for Whieldon until 1770, when he took the works previously occupied by Banks and Turner. He engaged a traveller named William Copeland, then in London, but a native of Stoke. Copeland was in the tea trade, and he appears to have suggested to Spode that he could also sell tea-ware to the customers who bought his tea. They took a warehouse in Fore Street, Cripplegate, and the venture proving eminently successful, Spode took Copeland into partnership in 1779. The

same year they purchased property in Lincoln's Inn Fields on the site of the theatre built by D'Avenant in 1662, and rebuilt by Rich in 1714, in which Garrick made his first appearance, and the "Beggar's Opera" was first produced.

The first Spode died in 1797, and was succeeded by his son, also named Josiah. Copeland died in 1826, and the second Josiah Spode a year later. The business fell to their sons, William Taylor Copeland and Josiah Spode the third. It is perhaps natural, but still a little curious, to find how closely the families of the great potters are connected by marriage. William Copeland, the tea traveller, was son of Mr. William Copeland, yeoman, of Holly Bush. In the latter's will, dated November 10, 1775, we find a daughter named Hannah mentioned, who was married to the younger Astbury. We have seen how Littler was connected with the Wedgwoods, and the connections by marriage between Wilson, Neale and Palmer, and the Mayers, Warburtons, and Ridgways. The third Josiah Spode died in 1829, and the second Copeland carried on the business by himself. He sat in Parliament for Coleraine from 1828 to 1832, and for Stoke from 1837 to 1852. He was an Alderman of the City of London, and Lord Mayor in 1835-6. In 1833 he took into partnership Mr. Thomas Garrett, and the firm was styled "Copeland and Garrett" until 1847, when Mr. Garrett retired. Mr. Copeland in 1867 admitted his four sons into partnership, under the style of W. T. Copeland and Sons, under which name the business has been continued until the present time.

Twenty-six years after Spode commenced potting, one of his engravers, Thomas Minton, determined to try his fortune as a potter. Minton was born at Shrewsbury, and apprenticed to Thomas Turner of the Caughley China Works. Here he engraved the famous Willow pattern, adapted from a design of

TEAPOT, SUGAR-BOX, AND CREAM JUG; BUFF WARE, GLAZED INSIDE. THE ORNAMENT IN ENAMELLED BLUE, MARKED "SPODE"
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

Chinese origin. Upon the completion of his apprenticeship, he went to London, where he executed important commissions for Josiah Spode. While in London he married Miss Sarah Webb, and shortly afterwards removed to Stoke, where he took a house near the Trent Bridge, and commenced business as a master engraver. He continued to work for Spode, but after a few years, as previously stated, decided to embark in the potting business. He purchased the site of the present Minton Pottery, and at first worked on a very modest scale. Mr. Stringer, who was for many years cashier at Minton's, collected some interesting information concerning the infancy of this business, afterwards destined to attain such colossal proportions, and to exercise such an influence on English Ceramics. At the outset there was only one biscuit oven and one glost, and some idea of the modest character of the concern may be gathered from the wage-list supplied by Mr. Stringer:

	£	s.	d.
May 21, By paid wages, coals, etc.	12	19	5½
„ 28, „ „ „ „ „	29	1	2½
June 4, „ „ „ „ „	32	9	7½

There is no record of the exact date when the business commenced, but it cannot have been long prior to 1796.

Soon after, Mr. Minton took into partnership Joseph Poulson, who had the reputation of being a good practical potter. The Poulsons had lived in Stoke for several centuries, and up to Wedgwood's time their house was the only one in Stoke of any importance. A Liverpool gentleman, a Mr. William Pounall, afforded them considerable financial assistance, and entered the firm as a sleeping partner. They then traded under the style of Minton, Pounall, and Poulson. They made chiefly printed earthenware, and from the outset the business was

successful. On the failure of the Turners of Green Dock in 1803, Mr. John Turner was engaged as practical potter to the firm, and he effected many improvements. But at least five or six years previously—the date cannot be accurately determined—Messrs. Pounall and Poulson retired, leaving Mr. Minton in sole charge of the business. Mr. Minton had four sons and six daughters, and in 1817 he admitted two of his sons into partnership. The elder, Thomas Webb Minton, was in holy orders, and in 1821 he retired to occupy a curacy at Chesterfield. For some years Mr. Minton had placed the books of the firm in charge of his wife's mother, Mrs. Webb, who appears to have been a person of great business capacity. She resided with the family at the house adjoining the works. Herbert, the second son, in whose hands the business developed so enormously, was born here, and subsequently sent with his brother and sister to a dame's school, kept by a Miss Cheadle, at a house standing where the Queen's Inn now is, on the corner of the Liverpool Road. Later, the young Herbert was sent to Audlem Grammar School, where he finished his education. At the age of sixteen he seems to have developed sufficient ability to act as salesman and representative for his father both in London and the provinces, and at twenty, as we have seen, he was admitted into partnership. For some unexplained reason the partnership was dissolved in 1828, and Herbert was out of the business until 1831, when he returned to his old position. In 1836 Mr. Minton the elder died, and in the same year Herbert took into partnership Mr. John Boyle, who, however, withdrew in 1841, and entered into partnership with Mr. Wedgwood, of Etruria. The printed punch-bowl given in the illustration (p. 300) is a good example of the firm's productions at this period. It is marked " M and B " (Minton and Boyle). In 1845 the nephew of Mrs. Minton, Mr. Michael Daintry

Hollins, entered the concern as partner, and later Mr. Colin Minton Campbell, nephew and heir of Mr. Minton, also joined. The firm then became known as Herbert Minton and Co.

In 1848 Mr. Minton acquired the services of M. Leon Arnoux, who had been manufacturing in Toulouse, and from this period the real celebrity of the Minton firm commences. It is not, however, to be supposed that before this time the productions of the pottery were of mediocre quality. As early as 1821 the manufacture of china, which had been abandoned in 1811, was revived, and in 1825 skilled workmen were imported from Derby. Steele, Bancroft, and Hancock produced excellent (now valuable) examples of the china painter's art, and John Simpson was engaged as figure painter from 1837 to 1847, when he removed to London to superintend the china-painting classes at Marlborough House. The chief designer was Samuel Bourne, who held the post from 1828 to 1860, a long and honourable service. Some years before Bourne's retirement Mr. Arnoux had taken over the post of art director, a position which he was not originally engaged to occupy; but Bourne was allowed a perfectly "free hand," to the great benefit of the firm, as his patterns always attained considerable commercial success.

In 1830 Mr. S. Wright had taken out a patent for the manufacture of encaustic tiles, but he only managed to attain a moderate degree of success in their manufacture, owing to the technical difficulties attending the unequal contraction of the variously coloured clays. This was ultimately remedied by one of those fortunate accidents which are incidental to the making of pottery; it was discovered that by placing a clay of rough texture between two layers of fine clay, the shrinkage was equalised. This patent Mr. Minton purchased, and with the assistance of Mr. Hollins he overcame all difficulties, and

triumphantly initiated this now important branch of the potter's art. A licence was sold to the Worcester Company, permitting the use of the patent; but the Worcester clays were found unsuitable, and the licence was transferred to Messrs. Maw, who removed to Broseley, and are now continuing the manufacture of these tiles. Another patent was taken out about 1840 by Mr. Prosser for solidifying powdered dry clay by subjecting it to great pressure in metal dies, thus obtaining a substance of great density and evenness of texture. This patent Mr. Minton also purchased, and it was first employed in the manufacture of china buttons, of which very large quantities were sold. It is an instance of great developments arising from very insignificant beginnings.

Among those who assisted Mr. Minton in the development of the encaustic tile process was Mr. George Eyre, a student of the Somerset House School of Design (the first school established by the Government for the art of design), who had been recommended to Mr. Minton by the principal of the school. Mr. Eyre designed pavements for Queen Victoria's residence at Osborne and other royal mansions and public buildings throughout the country; there is, however, one building, *viz.* the railway station at Stoke-on-Trent, built in 1848, which illustrates the durability of these pavements in a marked degree; this was designed by Mr. Eyre, and portions still remain little the worse for wear, although exposed to the roughest and heaviest traffic for more than half a century.

A notable example of the encaustic tile pavement is that in the Houses of Parliament, which was designed by Pugin and executed by Messrs. Minton. Brightness, durability, and cleanliness caused the encaustic and tesselated pavements to receive popular favour and to become a flourishing industry.

Jug, with ornaments in relief, coloured. Bethnal Green Museum.

Of Minton's later productions we shall have more to say in the concluding chapters of this work.

We have already mentioned Mr. John Davenport. He commenced at Stoke-on-Trent, where he was in partnership with Mr. Woolfe at a pottery adjoining Minton's.

In 1794 the partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Davenport took the works at Longport formerly occupied by John Brindley, brother of the famous engineer.

We have referred to his trip to France, and its effect on the quality of his china. This body (if we may accept Dr. Lardner's definition of "*the properties of true porcelain*," and dismiss the pedantic assumption that only certain materials may be employed) is, together with the pastes made at Minton's and Cauldon Place, equal to anything ever made. Davenport's decorations were chiefly of the "Japan" type—elaborate Oriental patterns in cobalt blue and red, heavily gilt, displaying no originality—and the chief claim of the "Davenport ware" to distinction is its exquisite material and capable craftsmanship. In 1801 John Davenport added glassmaking to his business, and the above remarks may be applied with equal force to his glass. It was an admirable "metal," beautifully blown or cut. In 1805 he entered into an arrangement with Fuseli to design stained glass windows, and to superintend the designs and work of other artists. It was a quaint selection, and we should be curious to see some of the productions of the combination. In 1803 Mr. Davenport had offered to raise, clothe, and equip completely (with the exception of weapons), free of expense to the Government, a volunteer corps of 500 men. The offer was accepted, but the corps limited to four companies of 80 rank and file. Mr. William Shaw in his very interesting book "When I was a Child," gives us a curious insight into the manners and customs

of some of these later Georgian potters, and tells us that when peace was declared after the long Continental War, Mr. Davenport and his managers, preceded by a brass band, paraded the streets wearing *glass hats*.

George IV. gave the firm an important commission in 1805, and the Royal crown was added to the trade mark. John Davenport died in 1834, having accumulated a very large fortune. His two sons Henry and William succeeded him. The former was killed in the hunting field, and William died in 1869, leaving the business to his son Henry, who, being in very affluent circumstances independent of the business, took little interest in its welfare, and allowed it gradually to fall to decay, and it was sold by auction in 1880.

The other firm mentioned as making fine china—Cauldon Place—was established and developed by the Ridgway family. The first notable potter of this name was Job Ridgway, born at Chell, near Burslem, in 1759. He was apprenticed at Swansea, whither his father had migrated in search of work. Becoming discontented with his position at Swansea he returned to Staffordshire in 1780. The times, however, were bad, and failing to obtain work he went to Leeds, where he remained two years. Here he came under the influence of the Methodist movement, and was "converted." He returned to Hanley, staying with his brother, but first making the condition that there should be "prayer in the house." Apparently his prospects had improved, for we find that in 1784 he married Miss Mary Mayer, sister of Elijah Mayer the potter. His wife had a business of her own, and she helped him financially and in other ways, so that by their combined industry and thrift Job and his brother George became master potters. They were successful beyond their hopes, and towards the end of the eighteenth century they

separated amicably, and Job built the Cauldon Place works, where he established a business known for many years as Job Ridgway and Sons. He made stoneware and blue printed ware, but the business did not assume any great importance until it came under the control of his two sons, John and William, on their father's death in 1814. Job Ridgway demands notice on account of his personality, his influence on the Methodist movement in the Potteries, and his initiation of a great and notable concern.

Any account of the social history of the Potteries would be inadequate which ignored the tremendous influence of the Methodist movement, of which the Potteries, and especially Tunstall, was a centre.

John Wesley, describing his first visit to Burslem in 1760, says in his Journal:

Sunday, June 9th.

"I preached at eight, to near double the number;—some quite innocent of thought,—five or six laughing and talking till I had near done, and one of them threw a clod of earth and struck me on the side of the head; but it neither disturbed me nor the congregation."

In 1781 he again writes, under date March 28:

"I returned to Burslem. How is the whole face of this country changed in about twenty years! Since the potteries were introduced (*sic*) inhabitants have continually flowed in from every side. Hence the wilderness has literally become a fruitful field. . . . And the country is not more improved than the people."

How far Wesley's inference may be sustained, that this was due to Methodism, is an open question, but there is no doubt that it was contributory. People like Job Ridgway and his sons—honest, dogged *bourgeois*, sincere and benevolent ; narrow, as their records show, but unspoiled by their great wealth—must have exercised an influence upon the people around them which was wholly beneficial. Both Job and John Ridgway had important interests outside Staffordshire. Job was a partner in the Bellevue Pottery at Hull from 1802 to 1804, when he retired, but again took it over in company with his brother George from 1806 to 1826. The Bellevue Pottery produced blue printed wares, and is here particularly mentioned on account of its manufacture of several patterns prized by collectors, notably one representing the *Crow Isle* defeating Paul Jones off the Yorkshire coast in 1779.

John Ridgway was for several years, between 1850 and 1860, a partner in the Architectural Pottery Company, at Poole, Dorsetshire. It was John Ridgway who was principally responsible for the development of the "Cauldon" wares. He dissolved partnership with his brother William about 1822, and devoted his attention to the improvement of his china, which he introduced in 1815. His blue printed wares—especially those designed by Cutts—became a cult. They had elaborate borders, with skilfully engraved views in the centre. Some of these—notably "the beauties of America," which, however, include almshouses and hospitals, are much sought after. John Ridgway did not confine himself to the manufacture of pottery decorated by mechanical methods ; he produced exceedingly rich and elaborate decorations. To say that his scheme of decoration was essentially imitative and adaptive, and that he originated nothing that could be identified with his own individuality or *fabrique*, would be surely

DECORATED CREAM-COLOUR CUP AND SAUCER BY W. ADAMS
Tunstall Museum

TRIAL OR PATTERN PLATE, ELIJAH MAYER
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

hypercritical, for the same charge could be brought (with perhaps greater reason) against Bow and Chelsea; neither of these concerns ever produced such a perfect paste, or applied such accomplished craftsmanship to its ornamentation, as did John Ridgway. He employed many skilful painters, notably Speight, a figure painter, whose manipulation was soft and delicate in the extreme, and he trained the best gilders in the country. Soon after the accession of Queen Victoria he was appointed "Potter to Her Majesty," and executed many commissions for the Royal palaces. He died about 1860. He had only one son, who died young, and in 1859 the business was transferred to Mr. T. C. Brown-Westhead, Mr. Bates, and Mr. William Moore, and the style of the firm changed from "John Ridgway" to T. C. Brown-Westhead, Moore, and Co.

William Ridgway, who parted from his brother John in 1830, rented the Church Street Works in Hanley from Elijah Mayer, and eventually became the proprietor of no less than six potteries, among which was the works in which Morley continued the manufacture of the Mason "ironstone." He took his son Edward John into partnership, and died in 1864.

Mr. E. J. Ridgway, after his father's death, entered into partnership with Mr. L. J. Abington, and the firm was known as Ridgway and Abington. This partnership was dissolved in 1866, and Mr. Ridgway erected the present Bedford Place Works at Shelton. Mr. Sparks, the London agent of the firm, and Mr. Ridgway's two sons, John and E. A. Ridgway, were taken into partnership in 1872, when Mr. Ridgway retired. The firm was known as Ridgway, Sparks, and Ridgway, but on Mr. Sparks's death in 1878 the title was changed to "Ridgways," the name of the existing firm. William Ridgway and his successors produced no wares of enduring artistic merit, but their productions

have always shown the family leaning towards soundness of material and thoroughness of workmanship.

In 1813 Charles James Mason of Lane Delph (now Middle Fenton) took out a patent for "ironstone china." Professor Church (who erroneously calls him *Miles* Mason) says that powdered iron slag formed an important constituent of this body. Charles James manufactured his ironstone under the style, first of G. M. and C. Mason, and afterwards of C. J. Mason and Co. The "Co." consisted of his brother, George Miles Mason, father of the painter George Mason, A.R.A. The brothers were descendants of Miles Mason, who was potting at Lane End in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Many curious mistakes have been made concerning the Masons, Marryatt and Chaffers describing them as potting at Leek. It is remarkable that this mistake is perpetuated by so careful a writer as Sleigh, who repeats the statement in his "History of Leek."

The mistake doubtless arises from the fact that George Miles Mason resided at Wetley Rocks, on the edge of the Leek moorlands, where his distinguished son obtained the material for his pictures of the "Harvest Moon," "Wind on the Wold," and other well-known paintings; but the manufactory was at Fenton. We have seen a piece of undoubted Mason ware stamped with the name of a pottery a few hundred yards from the Ironstone China Works, where the Masons potted. Chaffers gives an illustration of the stamp mentioned, and describes it as the mark of Minton Taylor, who certainly occupied this pottery about 1860, but made nothing but tiles, and no other pottery of any kind.

This, it would seem to us, is proof presumptive that the

Masons occupied this works at one period, probably before the large structure at Victoria Square was erected.

Mason made all kinds of ware. Besides table ware, jugs, teapots, and vases, he made large pieces, including punch-bowls, and posts for iron bedsteads. Professor Church says Mason's pottery was good, but the artistic value of his productions slender.

This, however, is surely a matter of degree. Mason is to be commended for the improvement he effected in the enamelling of earthenware. Like the Crown Derby factory, Spode, and others, he founded his decorations on Oriental models, and some of his richly coloured enamelled patterns, current to-day, have not been surpassed, if approached, in decorative quality. There is in the Hanley Museum a fine hexagonal vase of Mason's, Chinese in character, which is sufficient in itself to warrant the award of an honourable place to Mason among the potters of the nineteenth century. George Miles Mason unsuccessfully contested the borough of Stoke-on-Trent against Josiah Wedgwood and John Davenport, who were both returned.

In 1857, Francis Morley, a son-in-law of William Ridgway, purchased the patent, copper plates, and moulds from Mason, who had become involved and crippled in his finances. An immense sum of money had been expended on these plates and moulds, and Morley removed them to Hanley, and continued the business on the works belonging to William Ridgway, previously carried on by Hicks, Meigh, and Johnson. This firm (when Hicks and Meigh) made a large jug, 15 inches high, for the Corporation of Newcastle, now preserved among the Corporation insignia. It is extremely handsome, elaborately painted, grounded and gilt, and is described in a Corporation inventory as being "used as the amount of wagers to be laid—*i.e.* the Mayor's mug full of ale containing about twelve quarts."

Jewitt, with his usual inaccuracy as to proper names, describes the makers of this jug as Hicks and *Meyht* ("Corporation Plate and Insignia of Office of the Cities and Corporate Towns of England and Wales").

Mr. Morley was very successful with the Mason ironstone. In the first French Exhibition he exhibited some samples of the ironstone china, selected hastily from such general goods as happened to be in the warehouse, and for them he was awarded the first-class medal. In 1859 Francis Morley retired, and sold the entire business to Messrs. Ashworth Bros., who continued the manufacture of the old Mason patterns. A few years ago Mr. Goddard took over the business from Messrs. Ashworth, and continues it under the same style and title.

Mr. Taylor Ashworth, one of the partners in the concern above mentioned, took up a share in the management of the Old Hall Earthenware Company, previously the business of his father-in-law, Mr. Charles Meigh. The Old Hall Works was built on the site of the Old Hall or Manor House of the Colclough family. The first pottery erected on this site was said to have been a salt-glaze works, carried on by a Mr. Whitehead. This was pulled down and a larger works erected by Job Meigh in 1770.

It was continued by his son, and his grandson, Charles Meigh, already referred to, incorporated the business as a limited company in 1861. The Old Hall Earthenware Company made good earthenware and stoneware. Some good examples (including a lavishly decorated dinner service) are in the Stoke Museum. The works was dismantled in 1903. William Brownfield was born in a cottage adjoining this pottery. He commenced potting at the Cobridge Works in company with Messrs. Robinson and Wood on the premises then just vacated by Clews, who made

BASALTES VASE, ALCOCK

SUGAR-BOX OR "SUCRIER," ELIJAH MAYER

Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

the well-known and finely engraved "American Historical Plates." According to Chaffers, these works were started by Stevenson and Dale in 1780.

Jewitt, however, states that they were erected in 1808 by Bucknall and Stevenson, who were succeeded by A. Stevenson, and afterwards by Ralph and James Clews in 1818. Stevenson either took a new works, or his stamp was continued by Clews, otherwise Jewitt is wrong in his dates, as designs relating to the year 1824 bear the stamp "A. Stevenson." William Brownfield admitted his son, W. E. Brownfield, into partnership in 1871, and in 1873 the elder Brownfield died.

Another important mid-Victorian pottery was the Hill Pottery, Burslem. Its origin dates from about 1768, when John Robinson left Sadler and Green, of Liverpool, to make enamelled ware in Staffordshire. In the Mayer Museum at Liverpool is a teapot of Robinson's make, painted by Letitia Marsh, and given to Mayer by Dr. Simeon Shaw. Robinson took the Hill *Works*, where Ralph Wood potted. They were then carried on by Mr. Taylor, afterwards by John and Richard Riley, who moved to the Nile Street Works—now Doulton's—and were followed by Alcock and Keeling.

The latter retired, and Samuel Alcock built, in 1839, the fine block of buildings on the opposite side of the road called the Hill Pottery, the portico of which we illustrate on page 277. Alcock appears to have made basaltes and stoneware at the Hill *Works*, but to have devoted his attention principally to china on his removal to the Hill Pottery. He made some earthenware of a lighter kind, and vitreous stonewares in imitation of jasper. There is no record of his having made basaltes at the Hill Pottery, and the specimen facing page 296 is, so far as we know, unique. In 1860 the works and general estate were purchased

by Sir James Duke and nephews, and continued until about 1865, when it was sold to Mr. Thomas Ford, who in 1866 disposed of it to the "Earthenware and Porcelain Company," under the management of Mr. Richard Daniel, who was well known as a potter and decorator. It was carried on in the name of the Hill Pottery Co., Limited, late S. Alcock and Co. The specialities made were Etruscan wares—a kind of imitation in enamel colours of Wedgwood's "encaustic" painting in basaltes—and richly decorated china. The well-known flower painter, Richard Pilsbury, was trained here, and Mr. R. F. Abrahams, for many years art director at Copeland's, officiated in that capacity for several years at the Hill Pottery. In 1867 it was again in liquidation, and from that time its fortunes varied. The works were divided, Messrs. Alcock and Diggory carrying on the china section, and Messrs. Burgess and Leigh the earthenware. The latter firm continued successfully, and removed a few years ago to a new works in Middleport. The china portion changed hands as follows:

1870. Bodley and Diggory.
1871. E. F. Bodley.
1874. Bodley and Son.
1875. E. J. D. Bodley.

The latter continued business for fifteen or sixteen years, making china of extremely good quality and superior type of decoration.

Another important Burslem works is the Nile Street Pottery, which was built on the site of a still older pottery, as the porringers and other vessels unearthed during excavation proved.

The Nile Street Pottery was worked about 1800 by J. and R. Riley, already mentioned. They were succeeded by James Cormine, and again by his nephew Thomas Pinder, whose great-nephew, Shadford Pinder, worked the business under the style

of Pinder, Bourne and Co. In 1877 Messrs. Doulton and Co. of Lambeth entered into partnership with Mr. Pinder, for the purpose of making fine goods in earthenware and china. In 1881 Mr. Pinder retired, and the firm took its present title, Doulton and Co.

Other notable concerns making wares of good quality, but not coming sufficiently within our scope to demand detailed description are (and were) Furnival's of Cobridge; Hope and Carter's (now extinct); Edwards, Dalehall (extinct); Edge and Malkin; Pratt's, Fenton; Bishop and Stonier, Hanley; Dimmock's, Hanley (extinct); Mayers, Dalehall (now Keeling Bros.), and Brownhill's, Tunstall, also no longer in existence.

CHAPTER XXII

THE VICTORIAN POTTERS

IT is an undoubted fact that in the collection of ceramics in the Sèvres Museum, arranged by Brongniart, the English section, although very inadequate and incomplete, by no means representative, and although failing in many important particulars, nevertheless exhibits more variety and individuality than the pottery of any other Occidental nation. This individuality, sometimes charming, and often enough repellent, is characteristic of the race. Emerson says of the English, "Each man walks, eats, drinks, shaves, dresses, gesticulates, and in every manner acts and suffers without reference to the bystanders in his own fashion." The Saxon temper stands for liberty—liberty to act and speak as he chooses; liberty also to make what pots he likes in whatever way his whim directs. This leading characteristic affords an explanation of the fact that the English potters have achieved an honourable position in the work of the nations, without any kind of aid from the State. We must not lose sight of the greatly increased opportunities and advantages enjoyed by a State-subsidised pottery. A Government accustomed to make presents of magnificent services and vases, at least contributes to the maintenance of a certain standard of technical and artistic skill by relieving the potter from sordid commercial considerations. Therefore, in considering the international successes of a concern like Minton's, while we cannot

FRINTED PUNCH BOWL, MINTON AND BOYLE. INTERIOR

PRINTED PUNCH-BOWL, MINTON AND BOYLE. PROFILE VIEW
DIAMETER 16 INCHES
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

allow any commercial considerations to bias our judgment upon the general question of State aid, we must admit that the private enterprise which dared to cope with the representative manufactories of several Governments, which could, and did, select their workers from unofficial concerns, is deserving of all commendation. The tale of Minton's successes at the various international exhibitions is too long for recapitulation; moreover, it is no true criterion of enduring artistic merit, as the character of some of the medalled and diplomaèd productions at even recent exhibitions undoubtedly shows.

The scope of Minton's operations has been so wide, their processes so varied, their artisans so numerous and skilful, and their craftsmanship so sound, that this firm is indelibly associated with many triumphs of British ceramics. We have already traced the early history of the firm, whose palmy days were concurrent with the directorship of Mr. Colin Campbell.

This gentleman possessed many of the characteristics peculiar to Josiah Wedgwood. Unlike Wedgwood, however, he had no particular ability as a potter, but he possessed the same gift of organisation, together with an instinctive perception and anticipation of the prevailing taste. In matters artistic he justly relied on the experience of Mr. Arnoux, who exercised absolute control over the potting and decoration. Mr. Arnoux, as we have already pointed out, was no creative genius—never, as a matter of fact, made any claim to the possession of any degree of artistic power—but as a ceramic chemist he was perhaps unequalled in his time. His earliest task was the improvement of the china body and glaze, which he effected to the astonishment and admiration of all *savants*. He reproduced the turquoise, *rose du barry*, and *bleu de roi* of Sèvres, together

with many other colours considered to be beyond the attainment of the modern potter.

While we have referred to the quality of individuality in the Staffordshire potter, it must be confessed that this individuality is more apparent in materials and methods than in matters more purely artistic. The predilection of the Staffordshire man for copying—for the reproduction of other men's ideas, rather than the proper cultivation of his own creative faculty—has been referred to on more than one occasion in this work. Minton's have, perhaps, sinned in this respect more than most, and with less justification, from the opportunities they undoubtedly possessed of obtaining the best available talent.

We give a curious criticism, or appreciation, by Mr. J. C. Robinson, F.S.A., of a jewelled bottle, manufactured by Messrs. Copeland, then in the Museum of Ornamental Art at Marlborough House, and now at South Kensington, which will serve as an indication of the prevailing artistic taste of forty or fifty years ago.

"This really elegant and tasteful work affords a curious instance of modern eclecticism in design, *inasmuch as it is entirely composed from motives and decorative processes borrowed from several distinct sources.* In the first place, the form of the piece is taken from an ancient glass bocal, the handle exhibiting unequivocal marks of this origin, in being simply moulded from the glass without the least change or adaptation. . . . The superadded decoration is also copied from a specimen of ancient Italian jewelled embroidery on velvet, engraved in Richardson's work on 'Ornamental Design'; whilst the idea of applying this species of ornamental decoration to porcelain is *just as felicitously taken* from the so called 'jewelled porcelain' executed at Sèvres under Louis XVI."

The italics are ours, and comment is needless.

Mr. Campbell, who had great social influence, obtained from Queen Victoria the loan of a number of priceless Sèvres vases, which were reproduced exactly, Boullemier and Le Roi executing the painting, and Aaron Simpson the gilding. Mr. Arnoux then applied himself to the reproduction and adaptation to porcelain of Persian enamels, with designs based on the principle of Chinese and Japanese cloisonné.

About 1851 Mr. Herbert Minton acquired a number of examples of Italian majolica, which had formed part of the collection of the Duke of Buckingham, and Mr. Campbell determined to reproduce them. Mr. Arnoux made the enamels, and the painters Thomas Allen, Thomas Kirkby, and others were employed to reproduce the designs. This led to the revival of the manufacture of majolica, which rapidly assumed enormous proportions, and was speedily taken up by a score of other manufacturers. The majolica fountain previously produced by Herbert Minton, one of the chief attractions of the 1851 Exhibition, and now at Bethnal Green, must, however, be pronounced a magnificent failure; poor in design, and possessing none of the fine qualities of the productions of Della Robbia and his school.

About 1870 Mr. Campbell obtained the loan from the Royal and other collections of several vases and pitchers of the famous faïence d'Orion, and Charles Toft, a craftsman of singular ability, was selected to make replicas. The problem of dealing with clays of different colour, and consequently of different density, so as to secure exactly uniform contraction in the firing, was dealt with triumphantly by Mr. Arnoux, but the technical skill which was lavished upon them would have been far better employed upon work of an original character.

Toft was entrusted with all the potting which required special care or skill. He executed many excellent graffito and damascened vases, as well as a number of creditable pieces of pâte-sur-pâte. He claimed descent from Thomas Toft, the slip decorator.

The writer remembers hearing an interesting discussion between Toft and Mr. Arnoux concerning an elaborate vase with peculiarly intricate handles. It was intended for decoration in pâte-sur-pâte, by Mr. Solon, and doubts had been freely expressed as to the possibility of firing it without warping. As the decoration would be a costly matter, it was decided to fire a vase first without any decoration, before risking any expensive work. It was necessary to "prop" the handles in any case, and Toft and Mr. Arnoux held opposite views as to the manner of propping. Neither would yield, and at length Mr. Arnoux said, "Well, Toft, you shall make two vases, one your way, and one mine, and we will fire them both." This was done, and *both* vases came out of the oven perfect.

Toft left Minton's in 1883, and commenced potting on his own account in the works at Cliff Bank, once occupied by Whieldon. He did not succeed, whether from lack of capital or want of business acumen, it is impossible to say. He died a few years later. Mr. Arnoux's limitations, as already stated, were on the artistic side. He possessed exquisite taste, and was a dainty draughtsman, but the productions with which he must be identified are objects manufactured of perfect materials embellished with applied decoration of an adaptive kind. But with the crowd of artists employed, it is impossible that intermittent gleams of originality should not flash forth. Alfred Stevens, H. Stacey Marks, E. J. Poynter, and other artists of eminence made designs which Minton's executed.

The most notable figure connected with the art of the Minton

FRUIT-DISH, WEDGWOOD. PRINTED, AND COLOURED BY HAND.

Collection of G W. Rhead, senr.

FIGURE, CREAM COLOUR.
HEIGHT 6 INCHES

firm is undoubtedly Mr. Solon, who has been one of the great factors of their celebrity. His daintily conceived and skilfully executed conceptions are too well known to call for description here, and it only remains to say that his productions are the truest ceramics produced by Minton's. His son Leon was, until recently, art director at Minton's.

In 1868 the partnership between Mr. Colin Minton Campbell and Mr. Michael Hollins was dissolved, with the agreement that Mr. Hollins should continue the manufacture of encaustic and other tiles under the style of Minton, Hollins and Co., and Mr. Campbell the china and earthenware.

Mr. Hollins built a large manufactory at Cliff Bank, and for many years was the chief maker of tiles of all kinds. The firm of Minton and Co., contrary to agreement, continued the manufacture of tiles, and a lawsuit resulted. The courts upheld the rights of Mr. Hollins in his claim to the sole right of stamping his tiles with the name "Minton." Possession of any letters addressed to "Minton & Co.," containing any reference to tiles, was also awarded to Mr. Hollins.

The separation of the cousins was unfortunate, and the tension caused by the lawsuit and close business rivalry no less so. But in tiles, Minton, Hollins and Co. maintained their pre-eminence, and for a long period most of the new public buildings in England and elsewhere were fitted with the tiles of Minton, Hollins and Co.

About 1890 the failing health and advancing age of Colonel Hollins caused him to relax his supervision of the business. The monopoly which the firm enjoyed had been attacked by the inauguration of many other tile manufactories, and their prestige suffered to some extent in consequence.

No doubt, in the absence of Mr. Hollins, the practical and

clerical departments of the business were capably superintended, but the fact that a total change had taken place in the style of national architecture seems to have been inadequately realised by nearly all makers of tiles.

Encaustic tiles, at any rate, are founded upon purely Gothic conventions (the influence of Pugin was the immediate cause of their revival), and the rehabilitation of the tile industry generally, depends upon the man (not yet forthcoming) whose combined artistic, technical, and commercial equipment will enable him not merely to understand and sympathise, but to put himself in line with the aims of modern architecture. This consummation is to some extent being achieved, but not in Staffordshire.

Michael Daintry Hollins was an excellent ceramic chemist, and some of his glazes and enamels are still unequalled. He was originally intended for the medical profession, and became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, but never practised. He died in 1898, at the age of eighty-two.

Tiles are an important branch of ceramic art, and the potters of Staffordshire have peculiar facilities for their manufacture. If we resolutely dismiss from our minds the question of artistry, we must admit that the Staffordshire man is always a consummate potter, when he is not cramped by the exigencies of the "market." Firms not usually associated with the manufacture of tiles have, when occasion has demanded, triumphantly overcome great technical difficulties, in the face of European competition.

In 1868 the design for the Imperial Library at Paris included the tiling of the cupolas, and, says Marryatt, "Continental Europe was explored in vain for potters to undertake a task so colossal. The Dutchmen confessed that such tiles were beyond their ken,

. . . and even Sèvres shrank from the undertaking. At length Messrs. Copeland expressed their willingness to grapple with the difficulty. There are nine cupolas lined with painted slabs *all on the curve*, and each cupola contains 4,000 slabs. These 36,000 tiles have been fitted with a dexterity and faultlessness of finish which is only to be attained in English workmanship. The artistic decoration of the slabs is on a par with the excellence of the pottery, and the effect of the whole is wonderfully light, graceful, and airy."*

Copeland's have carried out other important commissions for mural decoration. In 1874-5 Mr. Macfarlane, the well-known manufacturer of artistic ironwork, commissioned Messrs. Copeland to decorate the walls of a palatial residence which he was then building, including conservatories, billiard and smoking rooms, Turkish baths, etc.

The subjects were multifarious, and included, among others, symbolical representations of Health, Strength, Courage, etc., and in the billiard rooms were large panels of 12 or 14 feet, representing various sports. These were designed and executed by Mr. R. J. Abraham, then recently returned from the South Kensington training schools, and M. Lucien Besche, who had previously been employed for a short period at Minton's. Mr. Hürten executed the floral work. These artists, together with Weaver (who painted birds), Dan Lucas, and Yale, extremely able landscape painters, were represented in most of the international exhibitions, and examples of their work also appear in the South Kensington and various other museums. Copeland's china was, and is, of very high quality. For the past twenty years they have had the advantage of the services of Mr. S. Alcock, a figure painter whose work is extremely

* "A History of Pottery and Porcelain, Mediæval and Modern, 1868."

decorative, soundly drawn, pure and subtle in colour, and daintily executed.

Messrs. Brown-Westhead, Moore and Co. carry on, at Cauldon Place, the traditions inaugurated by John Ridgway. A large number of sumptuous services have been produced, and many skilled artists employed. Repetitions of the fine blue printed ware made by John Ridgway have been re-introduced, supplemented by designs by Leonce and Mallet, who have also done a considerable amount of painting.

Other painters, such as Stephen Pope, Birbeck, Bernard, and Sieffert, have done work which is well known on two continents. We have already mentioned the colossal Shakespeare vase, painted by Boullemier for the Chicago Exhibition. An interesting concern, now unfortunately out of existence, was Brownfields, of Cobridge. After the death of Mr. William Brownfield, in 1873, the business came under the management of his eldest son, Mr. W. E. Brownfield. The services of Mr. L. Jahn, a talented artist and figure painter, were secured as art director, and under his control the firm showed signs of taking a leading, if not a premier place among the potters of the district. The best attainable modellers were employed, the bodies and glazes improved, and many interesting experiments made. Mr. Arthur Brownfield was an exceedingly good potter, and successfully solved several ceramic problems, which years later were heralded to the world by others with a blast of trumpets; but he lacked staying power, and when he had achieved anything, he was content to shelve it and turn his attention to something else. Only one of his many discoveries was put on the market, and this (an "aventurine" effect with showers of particles of gleaming metal suspended in the glaze) met with no extended success on account of the prohibitive price demanded.

MINTON CHINA FIGURES, ENAMELLED IN COLOURS, ABOUT 1838. HEIGHT 5 AND 7 INCHES RESPECTIVELY
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

But, owing to the enterprise of Mr. Jahn, many fine vases and statuettes of coloured porcelain were manufactured, some of them the finest examples of the kind ever produced in the country.

These were, at any rate, legitimate ceramics, as the clays were stained, and the colours not superimposed on the surface. The large Globe vase, already described, was executed in this method. Mr. W. E. Brownfield, however, appears to have been involved in disastrous speculations, and he withdrew from the firm about 1890. It was then carried on under the management of Mr. Arthur Brownfield on a reconstructed basis, as a co-operative pottery, called the Brownfield Guild Pottery. Mr. Frederick Rhead succeeded Mr. Jahn, and became art director to this remarkable venture. It had all the elements of success—the finest bodies and glazes—an unexcelled business connection, and a host of well-trained and capable craftsmen; but the workmen were nearly all small shareholders, and from these a cumbrous committee, invested with extraordinary powers, was selected, with Mr. Brownfield as chairman. As workmen, under the old system, they were honest, efficient and valuable servants; but under the "Guild" their performances were grotesque. Mr. Brownfield had delegated to them a considerable share of authority, and as he himself possessed very little administrative ability, the proceedings for the space of two or three years became chaotic. Such a state of things could not continue indefinitely, and the Guild was wound up about 1898, and the works demolished and sold for building purposes. Messrs. W. Brownfield and Sons manufactured the Gladstone testimonial vase in 1888 (see Frontispiece), and there are several admirable examples of their productions in Hanley Museum, one of which, the life-sized group of hare and boa-constrictor (modelled, however, in Paris) is illustrated at page 326.

The manufactures of the Hill Pottery are described in another place, but the last successor to the china department of this business (Mr. E. J. D. Bodley) deserves at least a passing mention.

Mr. Bodley commenced business in a very modest way, but soon began, with the assistance of Mr. T. Moorcroft, to engage quite a large staff of capable decorators. Mr. Bodley was frankly commercial, but his china was of good quality—he made no cheap wares—and his productions were generally distinguished by that indefinable quality called "good taste."

About the middle of the nineteenth century Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood and Sons commenced the manufacture of china. They engaged the services, as art director, of Mr. Thomas Allen, who received his early art training at Marlborough House. Mr. Allen, while still at Minton's (where he was employed until his engagement at Wedgwood's) executed in a most admirable manner a number of panels, dome-pieces, etc., in the South Kensington Museum, painted in enamel colours upon panels formed of a series of hexagonal tesseræ, only slightly glazed, a system which was initiated by Mr. Colin Campbell, and intended to combine the qualities of mural painting with the durability of mosaic. The dome and wall panels of the staircase leading to the Ceramic Court, and also one at least of the figures of great craftsmen in the South Court, were done in this method. It is difficult, however, to perceive any single advantage offered by this system over such a sumptuous and dignified art as that of mosaic, except, perhaps, a greater degree of naturalism, a very doubtful advantage at the best; it possessed not a particle of the brilliancy of mosaic, and offered no advantages on the score of rapidity of production. It is extremely unlikly that the system will ever be revived.

CAVERSWALL CASTLE, RESIDENCE OF THE LATE MR. GODFREY WEDGWOOD

Messrs. Wedgwood's essays in china and tiles (the latter of which they have now abandoned) are almost their only deviations from the class of wares inaugurated by Josiah Wedgwood. Their china is of good quality, and their designs numerous and varied, and sometimes very elaborate, but one is so inclined to identify them with the severe classic types of their jasper that the effect of their china is sometimes anomalous. But from time to time many interesting collections of modern Wedgwood wares have been got together, notably at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873 and the Paris Exposition of 1878, principally under the direction and advice of the late Mr. Godfrey Wedgwood, who was a gentleman of singular intellectual attainments, even among a family distinguished for culture. It is a matter of regret that his delicate state of health debarred him from taking a greater share in the management of the works, an occupation which would have been congenial to him, had his health permitted, and which would doubtless have resulted in the greatest benefit to the business. We give a drawing of Caverswall Castle, at one time the residence of Mr. Godfrey Wedgwood, and which he once cleverly etched and applied to certain pieces of pottery.

One of the largest and most important firms of the latter half of the nineteenth century is Messrs. Doulton and Co., of Burslem. We have already referred to the partnership of Doulton and Co., of Lambeth, with Mr. Shadford Pinder in 1877, and the latter's retirement. The work of the Lambeth firm in stoneware and terra-cotta is sufficiently well known, as also their "vitreous fresco," designed and painted under the direction of Mr. J. Eyre, examples of which may be seen in the interior of the Birkbeck Bank. When Messrs. Doulton

first entered into the Burslem business, one hundred and sixty people were employed, while employment is now found for over a thousand. Mr. John Slater was given control of the decorative department, and Mr. J. C. Bailey appointed manager. Every kind of ware is made, and the firm employs the largest staff of decorators in the Potteries.

While the productions of the Burslem branch cannot be said to vie with the Lambeth wares in artistic excellence, or as fictile productions, the multifarious types of ware and the exigencies of the "market" may be pleaded in extenuation. There is, at least, always an attempt to make the wares as artistic as the "market" will allow. The painting and other decoration—as applied decoration—is always creditable, and sometimes excellent. In the Paris and St. Louis Exhibitions were quantities of skilfully painted and decorated objects of every possible class and material.

The type of design is frequently banal, but here and there are examples which exhibit a sounder type of design than that produced by any contemporary English pottery. Doulton's, too, have produced worthy specimens of some of the Oriental ceramic problems which have lately achieved a certain popularity, such as "flambé" glazes. They have done good service to the ceramic industry by producing occasionally unambitious articles at reasonable prices, which, as decorative schemes, both as regards line and colour, are satisfactory in every respect.

Few other firms come within our limits. Furnival's, Bishop and Stonier's, G. Jones and Sons, and others have produced good pottery, while the great "American" firms—that is, those which supply the American market, such as Meakin's, Johnson Bros., Maddock's, and Grindley's—deserve notice less on account of their enormous exportation than the fact that they exhibit

the Staffordshire characteristic of making ware which of its kind is unrivalled, at any rate, in respect of its durability and finish.

Of interest to collectors, if not to artists, are the wares of the early Victorian potters, some of them half forgotten: R. and H. Daniel, Bailey and Batkin, Hilditch and Hopwood, and Dale and Page, afterwards Dale, Page, and Goodwin.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FOREIGN CONTINGENT

Here enter ye, and welcome from our hearts,
All noble souls, endowed with gallant parts.
This is the glorious place, which bravely shall
Afford wherewith to entertain you all.

. . . . . .

Stay here you lively, jovial, handsome, brisk,
Gay, witty, frolic, cheerful, merry, frisk,
Spruce, jocund, courteous, furtherers of trades,
And in a word, all generous comrades.

RABELAIS (*Inscription on the great gate of Thélème*).

THE attitude of the old English lady, who declined to speak French in Paris because (as she explained) "it encourages them," and of the British gentleman, who, visiting the vineyards of Saône et Loire, and being offered the choicest wines of the province, declined them, and clamoured for whisky and soda, is typical of certain national traits which have attracted attention, not to say reverence, on the Continent. Staffordshire men, for some reason—probably their comparative isolation—have never shown a distrust of their comrades from other countries. The tendency has been, happily, rather to look up to them than to patronise them. Few foreigners worked in Staffordshire before the French Revolution of 1848 and the Hyde Park Exhibition of 1851. Prior to these dates the most important were J. Voyez and Joseph Monglott, the latter of whom worked for Adams.

Voyez is described by Professor Church as a pirate, who "sometimes worked for Palmer, and sometimes on his own account. He went so far as to forge the names of Wedgwood and Bentley upon the intaglio seals which he made." He was employed by Wedgwood, and probably by Ralph Wood. He appears for a short period to have manufactured pottery on his own account. In 1773 he published "A catalogue of intaglios and cameos after the most esteemed of the antiques, made by J. Voyez, sculptor, Member of the Royal Society of Artists of Great Britain, and to be sold at his house at Cobridge, near Newcastle, Staffordshire." At Cobridge he seems to have been partner for a time with Hales. His best-known work is a jug modelled to represent the trunk of an oak-tree, with two rustic figures in high relief, one holding a bird's nest. Many of these jugs are in existence, the British Museum, the South Kensington Museum, with its offshoot at Bethnal Green, each having several copies. The jug is dated 1788, and signed J. Voyez. The signature is no proof of any piece having been actually made by Voyez, for he appears to have signed his models for various makers.

Other pieces by Voyez are a match-holder nearly a foot high, also formed as a tree-stem, with a boy and girl with lambs and dog, an owl being perched on the stem.

The British and South Kensington Museums have each a plaque signed by Voyez, representing three grooms drinking, with an empty cask for a table. Other foreign modellers employed by Wedgwood were Racetti, Dalmazzoni, and Angelini.

About 1845 Spode had been experimenting with a view to the discovery of a material to imitate marble, and with the assistance of Mr. John Mountford succeeded in producing what

they described as "statuary porcelain." Minton's had also been experimenting with the same object in view, and about the same time, or a little later, produced a similar statuary material which they named "parian." Both firms claimed to be the originators of the material, and with a view to utilising its possibilities Mr. Minton secured the services of a well-known French sculptor, M. Emile Jeannest. He produced a number of models of great charm and skill, but only remained with the firm a few years, leaving them for the purpose of accepting the post of art director at Messrs. Elkington's, the well-known silversmiths. He was followed by Carrier-Belleuse, whose work is known over two continents. M. Carrier-Belleuse, however, always had a hankering for the production of sculpture on a large scale, and eventually, after a stay of three or four years, returned to Paris. He continued, however, to accept occasional commissions for the Potteries, and modelled a number of statuettes, vases, and centrepieces for Minton's, together with several important works for Messrs. W. Brownfield and Sons, among which was the great globe vase, eleven feet high. His work is too well known to need detailed description. He had an extraordinary facility of execution, and although his figures were marred by an exaggerated or affected grace, they were modelled with great power and knowledge.

M. Hughues-Protat followed Carrier-Belleuse at Minton's, and was working for the firm as late as 1858. Protat was a modeller of singular talent, especially in his modelling of Cupids, which, in conception and treatment, rather resembled the work of the best artists of the Italian Renaissance than that of any contemporary of his own country. Both Carrier-Belleuse and Protat held the post of modelling-master in the Stoke and Hanley Schools of Art, and there can be little doubt that they

exercised a remarkable influence on the young group of modellers in the district, among whom was Rowland Morris, who afterwards, in London, modelled the fine terra-cotta panels of "The Months" on the façade of the Wedgwood Institute at Burslem.

About the same time two other foreign sculptors of talent found employment at Minton's. The first was Giovanni Meli, an Italian, who resigned his position about 1858, and commenced the manufacture of parian statuary in opposition to his late employers. His works was also in Stoke, and he succeeded in making wares of a very good quality and finish, which he exhibited in London in 1862. Probably lacking in business acumen, he seems to have failed to make a success from a financial point of view, and the business was taken over by Messrs. Robinson and Leadbeater, who practically established a monopoly in the manufacture of parian statuary, which monopoly they enjoyed for many years.

The second sculptor above referred to was M. Victor Simeon, a Frenchman, and an eccentric. He modelled Minton's well-known "Captive" vase, so-called from the figures of two captives lying on the shoulder of the vase, with their hands bound to the rim of the neck, and forming the handles; the motif probably suggested by the story of Prometheus, as the dome-shaped cover is surmounted by a vulture with outspread wings. Simeon was regarded as a kind of madman. He made no acquaintances, and had a habit of walking along the streets muttering and gesticulating to himself. He is said to have accidentally caught sight, on one occasion, of the plaster casts of the Caryatides from the Erectheum, in the vestibule of the Stoke School of Art, to have entered the building, and to have performed a kind of dance, accompanied by whoops of delight,

VASE WITH FIGURES MODELLED BY CARRIER-BELLEUSE, AND DECORATED IN PÂTE-SUR-PÂTE, BY L. M. SOLON

(By the courtesy of Messrs. T. Goode & Co.)

to the dismay and astonishment of the aged janitor. Many queer stories are still told of Simeon's doings. He frequently wandered to Trentham, Oak Hill, and elsewhere, in company with a French horn. He would climb a tall tree, seat himself among the branches, and and awake the echoes of the night by loud and prolonged blasts upon his instrument.

In 1848 Mr. Herbert Minton was fortunate enough to secure the services of M. Leon Arnoux, who enjoyed the reputation of being one of the first of living ceramists. M. Arnoux was the son of the Widow Arnoux of Apt, near Avignon, who continued the manufacture of marbled ware similar to the agate wares of Staffordshire, originated by Bennet of Staffordshire, who settled in Apt about 1780.

M. Arnoux was originally engaged by Mr. Minton with a view to the production of the French hard porcelain, and in 1851 vessels for laboratory purposes were made in this material, exhibited, and pronounced by experts to be superior to those made at Berlin and Meissen, of which large quantities were imported into this country. But M. Arnoux, after successfully overcoming the difficulties attending the manufacture of hard porcelain, became convinced that the English bone china possessed the chief advantages of both the hard paste and the *pâte tendre*. To quote his written words upon the subject: "Certain very particular amateurs bring an objection against British porcelain, and say that as it has phosphate of lime for its base instead of being composed entirely of *pâte fritte*, it has no claim to be called *pâte tendre*. This objection appears to be nearly groundless. The chief beauty of the *pâte tendre* consists of the complete amalgamation of the colours with the glaze, and also in its capability of receiving certain tints which cannot be applied to any other kind of porcelain, such as turquoise

blue, emerald green, and rose du Barry. If our porcelain comprise these qualities in the highest degree—if its whiteness and transparency have been increased by the employment of phosphate of lime, who has any reason to complain? Our productions possess all the advantages of the old porcelain, and have in addition several accessory ones. We shall therefore do wisely to uphold this manufacture, since it brings us nearer to perfection."

M. Arnoux was originally engaged as potter and chemist; but his perfect knowledge of the decorative capacities of colours, bodies, and materials, coupled with his exquisite taste, led to his being appointed to the dual position of potter and art director. His career is indelibly connected with that of Minton's. Their triumphs are his, and his theirs. Never evincing any great originality, he appears to have delighted in the solution of ceramic problems of past potters, hitherto considered insoluble, and also in the reproduction of processes declared to be out of the reach of the modern potter. He reproduced the palette of Sèvres, the inlays of Orion, the enamels of Persia, and the majolicas of Italy. But he was not merely satisfied to copy. By his advice and instrumentality the best available craftsmen of the Continent were engaged by Mr. Minton, and by his successor, Mr. Colin Minton Campbell. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 gave the firm an opportunity of engaging a number of artists of various nationalities, whose means of employment had been disturbed or disorganised by the war. Foremost among these was M. Louis Marc Solon, whose delicate fancy and exquisite manipulation have been for so many years employed in the production of those decorations in *pâte sur pâte* which are so well known to all students and lovers of ceramics.

M. Solon is no less known as a collector, and as the chief authority on old Staffordshire wares. He was born at Montauban in 1835. At an early age he entered the studio of M. Lecoq de Boisbaudrau, and became strongly imbued with that feeling for decorative art which has always been characteristic of his work. Among his earliest original essays was a small volume or portfolio of etchings of motifs for pottery decoration and metalwork.

He tells us with some humour (in an early number of the "Studio") of the scant success attending this initial effort in published work, only a few copies being sold. But in this temporary disappointment there were compensations. One of the few copies sold was bought by Frederick (afterwards Lord) Leighton, then a student in Paris, and the etchings attracted the attention of M. Nicolle, then director of Sèvres, who offered the young student permanent employment at the Imperial factory.

The offer was accepted, and M. Solon was delighted to take part in experiments then being directed to the development of the *pâte-sur-pâte* process. He turned his attention to figures, and after twelve years' service at the Imperial factory the chances of continued employment were rudely interrupted by the war, and he came to England. Here he married the eldest daughter of M. Arnoux, the master ceramist.

M. Solon has contributed invaluably to the literature of ceramics. Besides the "Art of the old English Potter"—illustrated by etchings scarcely rivalled by Jacquemart—he has given us valuable works on stoneware, porcelain, and papers on half-forgotten wares such as the murrhines, old celadons, and the "noble buccaros."

About the same time came Mussill, Boullemier, Besche, Leroy, Comolera, and many others of less standing. MM. Lessore,

Hürten, Jahn, and Henk had already been in Staffordshire for some years. Lessore came to Minton's in 1858 from Sèvres, where he had been very successful, a pair of his vases having been purchased by the Emperor of Russia for 1,000 guineas. It was reported that he left Sèvres through the dissension and jealousy awakened among his brother artists by the extreme originality of his work and its unusual style of execution. It is more likely that his own crochety character had something to do with it, for he failed to work amicably with M. Arnoux, who was not at all difficult to work with under ordinary conditions.

At any rate he stayed at Minton's but a short time, and transferred his services to Messrs. Wedgwood's, at Etruria. Here he achieved considerable success, adding to his reputation by his exhibits at the international exhibitions of London, Paris, and Vienna. He remained at Etruria but a very few years, and removed to Fontainebleau, as the English climate did not suit him. He continued his connection, however, with Messrs. Wedgwood until his death, which occurred in 1876. Lessore was originally intended for the law, but having a preference for an artistic life, entered the studio of Ingres. It is one of the curiosities of art tuition in France that a pupil often achieves success by means of artistic methods diametrically opposed to those of his master. This was certainly the case with Lessore; for nothing could be more unlike the severity and restraint of Ingres than Lessore's florid, exuberant design and workmanship, which was so absolutely personal and individual that it attracted no following, and seems to have exercised no influence whatever on his contemporaries or successors in Staffordshire or elsewhere.

Very different was the case of Hürten, who probably established a larger following than any other foreign artist who

Study of Flowers. C. F. HÜRTEN.

settled in the Potteries, with the possible exception of Mussill. It is not our business to inquire at this point as to the influence of either of these artists, whether beneficial or otherwise. It is sufficient for the present to record the fact that they exercised a considerable influence. Charles Ferdinand Hürten was German by birth and French by education. He was born in Cologne in 1818, and studied for a time in the school of art in that city. At the age of eighteen he went to Paris, where he soon became known as a painter of flowers, and was entrusted with several commissions for Sèvres. His work at the International Exhibition at Paris in 1858 attracted the attention of Messrs. Copeland, and he entered their service in 1859. He remained with the Copelands until 1897, a long and honourable service, brightened by many professional successes. Hürten was the first ceramic flower-painter in this country who produced absolutely original work. Previously certain conventions of arrangement, treatment, and technique supposed to be proper to ceramics had been used, resulting in a strange similarity of effect only varied by the mannerisms of the executants. Hürten painted all his flowers from nature, or from "nature studies" made for the purpose. His studies (like those of Mussill) are better artistically than in their application to the material of pottery. Hürten's work, although not at all in accord with the modern and more reasonable preference for constructive rather than applied decoration, has maintained its popularity, and examples command very high prices, especially in America. There are several examples in the South Kensington Museum, including a large vase, five feet high, which was purchased by the Government from the Exhibition of 1862. This vase, though atrocious in design, is really excellent in the drawing and grouping of the flowers, together with their powerful yet delicate execution, and

serves as an object lesson on the misapplication of real talent. Mr. Hürten had an imposing presence and a genial disposition, which helped to further increase his popularity among his acquaintances.

Mr. Henk was also a German, and, we believe, a fellow-townsman of Hürten's. He entered the employment of Messrs. Minton about 1848, and worked for them for close upon thirty years. He was a painter of figures, chiefly Cupids, and his work was characterised by mellowness of colour and great finish. He died in 1905, and his son, Mr. John Henk, occupies the position of chief modeller to the Minton firm.

Mr. Louis H. Jahn came to England in 1862 and was also engaged by Minton's. He is a figure painter of considerable talent, and his work contributed its quota to the various international successes of the firm. Mr. Jahn, however, left Minton's in 1873 to take up the duties of art director at the manufactory of William Brownfield and Sons. Here he was instrumental in the production of a number of important and unique pieces—among many others, the great globe vase in tinted porcelain. On the retirement of Mr. Arnoux in 1900, Mr. Jahn for some time filled the position of art director at Minton's, but after a comparatively short period, retired from the practice of art.

Inaction, however, was not suited to his energetic temperament, and to the great gain of the town and industry of Hanley, he accepted the curatorship of the Museum, a post which he still fills. He has a wide and extensive knowledge of pottery, and is himself an indefatigable collector. By his kindness we have illustrated a number of pieces from the Hanley Museum, together with several from his own collection.

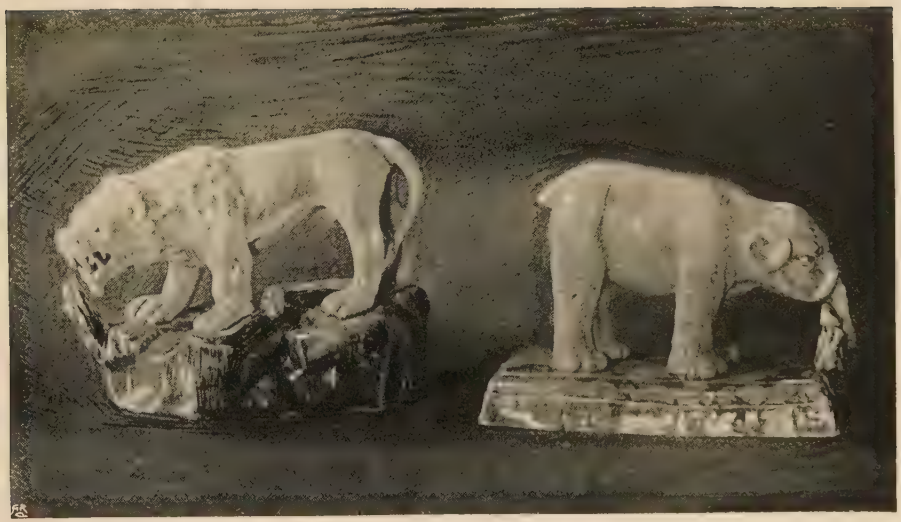
About 1870 Mussill was engaged by Minton's. Mussill was an Austrian, and studied in Paris under Hürten and

others. He effected what may be described as a veritable revolution in the style of flower-painting previously in vogue. His studies, executed on tinted paper in *gouache*, were remarkable for breadth and vigour, and suggested to Mr. Arnoux the possibility of a new application of the flower-painter's art to pottery. Experiments were made on Minton's beautiful red body, taken from Cocknage Hill—a continuation of the same seam from which the Elerses obtained their clay—resulting in the production of a long series of large vases and plaques which were extremely broad and powerful in effect. Mussill was incredibly swift. He declined a fixed salary, and was paid an arranged price for each piece. The dark background of his ware, and the solidity and firmness of the under-glaze palette prepared for him by Mr. Arnoux, enabled him to economise labour, and to avail himself to the utmost of his executive facility. He would express the down on the breast of a white cockatoo with a few "flicks" of a large brush. The prices of his pieces were high, but sold readily; and as he lived unassumingly, if not ascetically (he was a bachelor), he accumulated a quite considerable fortune. He died early in the present year (1906) under somewhat distressing circumstances. He had for many years an aged housekeeper, who died a few years ago. After her death he lived alone, only having occasional assistance from a charwoman. We knew Mussill intimately, and always found him genial and hospitable (the popular idea being to the contrary). He did his own cooking and performed for himself the minor household offices. One morning a tradesman calling for orders found the house locked, and suspecting something wrong, called assistance, and the door was burst open. Poor Mussill was found dead with a ruptured blood-vessel.

Of an entirely opposite character was Boullemier. Bluff, hearty, jovial, he was known and liked by everybody. It would be safe to say that in the whole of North Staffordshire no person was more generally known, or a greater favourite. He was essentially a *bon camarade*. He was born in 1840 at Sèvres, where his father was a well-known decorator. He studied under Fragonard (of Sèvres), and later was employed by M. Deyfus, a well-known ceramic artist of Paris. Boullemier was in Paris during the siege, serving in the National Guard. He was somewhat egotistical in his manner, but really quite modest, and we recollect once asking him if he took part in any fighting. "I did not take part in *much*," he replied gravely, "but I will tell you of my most serious combat. Myself and a comrade were performing a quite ornamental and useless sentry duty, and at the end of our beat we met under a lamp, turned round, marched back, and repeated the process. The night was like ourselves—wet and miserable. We were also dreadfully hungry, for food was scarce. On meeting at the lamp, we saw a piece of 'shocolât' in the mud at our feet.

"We snatched simultaneously at that 'shocolât,' and we fought for it. Indeed, I do not know who was the victor, but we were both wounded, and—*ciel!*—how we were mudded! And we also lost that 'shocolât' in the mud. Such," added Boullemier gravely, "is the fortune of war."

During the Commune he came to England, and was at once installed at Minton's, for whom he continued to work until his death. He painted every class of figure decoration with an unsurpassed delicacy of execution, and an unrivalled daintiness of palette. His work, always popular, is now increasing in value. Considering the extremely high finish of most of his work he was amazingly prolific, and was represented at all the



CREAM-COLOURED ANIMALS, TORTOISESHELL BASES, WHIELDON. HEIGHT 7 INCHES
Hanley Museum

LIFE-SIZE MAJOLICA GROUP—HARE AND BOA-CONSTRICTOR, BROWNFIELDS. MODELLED IN PARIS
Hanley Museum

exhibitions up to 1900. He painted a colossal "Shakespeare" vase for Messrs. Brown-Westhead, which attracted considerable attention at the Chicago Exhibition. His work will always obtain for him an honourable position in English ceramics, but he will be long remembered in Staffordshire for his personality alone. Frank and genial, he imagined himself a typical "John Bull," which he really was singularly unlike. He was, in fact, much more like Daudet's "Tartarin of Tarascon." He had a fine bass voice, was a good musician, and an actor of no mean ability. He died at Stoke in 1900, and few have left behind them a wider circle of mourners than Antonin Boullemier.

Lucien Besche also came to Staffordshire in 1871. He was with Minton's for a short period, and afterwards was engaged by Copeland's, for whom he executed some important mural decorations. Besche was an artist of great versatility, but was most successful in figure painting. He migrated to London in 1885, where he employed himself in painting in oil, drawing for the magazines, and, among other miscellaneous work, designing costumes for comic opera. He died in 1901.

Paul Comolera also drifted to Staffordshire on the backwash of the war. He was an animal sculptor of great attainments, and Minton's utilised his talent in the production of their majolicas and the larger articles of parian. Comolera was distinctly eccentric, although his eccentricities were not so marked as those of Simeon, mentioned earlier in this chapter. He converted his workshop into a menagerie, which was generally somewhat odoriferous, and not always even a safe place to be in. When the late Duke of Sutherland, in one of his frequent visits to the Minton factory, was introduced to Comolera, the latter seized the opportunity of asking for the loan of a stag from the park at Trentham. The bluff old duke (of engine-

driving fame) was greatly interested in Comolera's work, and a few days afterwards a conveyance appeared at the works, containing a magnificent buck, secured with ropes, and in charge of four keepers. With enormous trouble it was taken, struggling desperately, to Comolera's studio, where it was secured. The artist made a fine life-sized model of the animal, notwithstanding the inconvenience occasioned by the creature's struggles to be free.

He had also a splendid Persian cat, which he modelled in the form of a jug, among other things, and which was the hero of the great Comolera-Boullemier epic, which provided matter for conversation and amusement on the Minton Pottery for many months. The facts, divested of the heroic character imparted to them by the chief actors, and told baldly, are these: Comolera, on the occasion of his taking a holiday, left his cat in charge of the Boullemier family, with a sum of money for an abundant daily supply of milk, together with elaborate instructions for its treatment. The cat was greatly attached to M. and Madame Comolera, and fretted in its new quarters. Boullemier, the kindest of men, was greatly concerned. The cat visibly deteriorated in physique, and neither blandishment nor strategy availed to induce the animal to assimilate its proper supply of nourishment, although pans and saucers of milk were repeatedly placed in its path. Comolera, upon his return, observing the condition of his property, with an ominous calmness, denounced Boullemier as a traitor and a "brigand!" Explanations were useless, were totally ignored; he was contemptuously charged with embezzling the money supplied for the milk, or (which to Boullemier was the unkindest cut of all) drinking it himself. Even a Frenchman is mortal. Boullemier lost his temper, applied the epithet "gamin!" dashed down a sum of money, and turned on his heel. It would serve no purpose to

enumerate the details. There is a story of the money being returned on a shovel, carried by an unkempt boy. (Boullemier, we may say *en passant*, admits the circumstance of the boy's visit, but denies the shovel.) The quarrel is intensified, is carried on in public, and, to the intense disappointment of the bystanders, in the French language. Boullemier, clenching his fists, and performing extraordinary and unscientific evolutions with them, exclaims loudly in English, "No! come out, like an *Englishman*, and fight in the Angleesh fash-ion!" The invitation was declined, and the public part of the affair ended here, owing, doubtless, to the discreet intervention of Mr. Arnoux. Comolera returned to Paris in 1875, where he died a few years later.

M. Leroy was another of the contingent who arrived at the time of the war. His speciality was the painting of enamels after the manner of old Limoges; but he also painted flowers in a finished and dainty fashion. He is now art director at the Crown Derby works.

About 1880 M. Maxime Avoine was employed as sculptor in connection with several important buildings in London, and was offered a position at Stoke. He remained at the works for a few years, and eventually established an independent studio, where he is now working. Many other foreigners of more or less celebrity have found employment in the Staffordshire potteries. Among these are MM. Leonce, Mallet, Bernard, Palm, Leger, Joubert, Rataud, Scharff; and Herren Hils, Müller, Goldermann, Sieffert, and others. The fact that the general foreign influence has been great cannot well be doubted. But there is grave doubt whether the influence has been upon the whole beneficial. For a time all national feeling in design or treatment was eclipsed if not obliterated, and the development in mere executive skill appeared to be a positive danger.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE STAFFORDSHIRE MAN ABROAD

> Not chance of birth or place has made us friends,
> Being oftentimes of different tongues and nations;
> But the endeavour for the self-same ends,
> With the same hopes, and fears, and aspirations.
>
> LONGFELLOW.

WHATEVER may be the verdict upon the artistic value of the productions of Staffordshire in comparison with those of other potting centres (and assuredly the Staffordshire potter is well able to hold his own in this respect), it is certain that no other group of potters in the world, at any period, have produced such a *variety* of wares, and added so much to the practical knowledge and technical equipment of the potter.

Staffordshire, too, during practically the whole of its existence as a pottery community, has been a recruiting ground for the potters of the world in search of skilled workmen. How many thousands of these have gone to swell the ranks and add to the knowledge of foreign competitors it is impossible to say. Many have gone to Germany, France, Italy, Holland, and Spain, and even to more remote countries, while, certainly, great numbers have gone to America. We have had, it is true, many foreigners in Staffordshire, but not half a dozen have established an independent pottery, and none have succeeded from a business point of view. On the other hand, the records of Staffordshire workmen who have done service in foreign lands, as also of

those who have established businesses for themselves, are necessarily scant. But we have sufficient evidence that the tale is on the side of the Staffordshire man; he has shown the old Saxon propensity for either keeping himself aloof at home, or sallying abroad in quest of his fortune.

We have had in England a few Dutchmen, mostly workmen, however; but in Delft, to quote a case in point, the Englishmen of whom we have records were all master-potters; all records of mere workmen being lost. In the list of the founders of the Guild of St. Luke we find the name of Thomes Jansz. The surname is extremely Dutch, but "Thomes" is neither Dutch nor anything else. Jansz is specially described as an Englishman. His name, in short, is an English name with Dutch spelling—Johnson, in fact; the "z" meaning *zoon*, or son. Thomes—Thom-es—may well be Thomas.* In later records we find a considerable number of potters who joined the guild above mentioned, describing themselves as "Strangers," and a few as Englishmen. Their names, however, are all spelt Dutch fashion. In 1800 one Piccardt, an Englishman (described as a soldier), took up the factory of the "Porcelain Bottle" in Delft, but ceased making vessels, and transformed it into a manufactory of fireproof bricks. Probably Mr. Piccardt was originally a brick or tile maker who had enlisted in the army, or had been "pressed."

The chief markets of Staffordshire Turner, of Green Dock, were France and Holland. In the latter country numbers of

* This name is also spelt "Tome Jansz." The earliest authentic example of blue-painted Delft ware is signed thus. It is a dish painted with the Last Judgment, containing more than four hundred figures. Mr. Solon says the name is a misspelling, imperfectly concealing the name of Tom Jones, a soldier, who is described as having been "born in England, beyond London, and who came to Holland with the English Regiment commanded by Captain Hamwout" (?).

potters imitated his wares, which were popular on account of their hardness and ability to resist high temperatures. M. Havard mentions Arend de Haak as the first Delft potter to imitate Turner. In 1808 Sanderson, a Burslem or Tunstall man, joined Bellaert, and developed the imitations of Turner on a large scale. The descendants of Sanderson's family are still living at Porthill. A great business was done in Holland in both real and imitation Turner wares, and Holland is now the best hunting-ground for collectors of Turner. Staffordshire earthenwares generally were much in demand on the Continent for at least fifty years prior to this date.

As early as 1740 a manufactory was established in Paris, near the Pont-aux-Choux, called "the Royal Manufactory of English Clays." This business developed into an important concern, and its products were mentioned in the "Merchant's Almanac" of 1772 as being made by "the Royal Manufactory of French Clays in imitation of those of England." This factory produced excellent wares, well modelled, and carefully potted. In 1775 we find Ralph Shaw, of Burslem, smarting under his defeat by Astbury in the law courts (there was a dispute about a patent), migrating to France, and there, in company of William Clarke, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, obtaining ordinances granting them several privileges, together with a subsidy of twelve hundred francs. Clarke had previously experimented at Lille, for in 1773 he was authorised "to create a fabric of a kind which is only made in England"—probably pipe-clay—as he appears to have worked for the Riggs. The experiment proved unsuccessful, for in 1775 we find him soliciting letters patent to establish himself with Shaw at Montereau.

The factory was started, and they were in receipt of their subsidy for many years. A branch establishment was opened

BUSTS OF SHAKESPEARE AND MERCURY, BASALTES COFFEE-POT, J. WARBURTON; SALT-GLAZED WARE, ADAMS OF STOKE
Tunstall Museum

at Criel, and both branches have been continuously prosperous up to the present time.

Another Staffordshire man, named Bennet, migrated to Apt, near Avignon, where he made agate and marbled wares after the Staffordshire method, in 1780. This business was continued up to 1802 by the Widow Arnoux, mother of M. Leon Arnoux, the well-known ceramist.

Madame Arnoux, however, varied the productions of Bennet slightly by applying to the marbled surface modelled flowers in relief.

About the same time, or perhaps a year later, the manufactory of Douai was founded by two brothers, Charles and James Leigh, of Staffordshire, who, with many others, fled to France to escape the religious persecutions directed against the Roman Catholics in England. The brothers obtained financial assistance from the municipality, which granted them, free of cost, the ground on which to build their factory. Further assistance was obtained from a prominent citizen, Georges Bris, who afterwards became a partner of the concern.

The firm prospered steadily; and after a few years another partner was admitted, Howze de Alnoit, when their business attained considerable size and importance.

All their goods were made after the English manner, and considerable quantities of dinner ware were manufactured, besides ornamental goods of many kinds, including perforated trays, dessert plates, dishes, snuff-boxes, and small knick-knacks. These were made in English cream colour, and in agate or "scrodled" wares, which were termed by the Douai people "gaiole," signifying motley. Most of their products were stamped "Leigh & Cie."

In 1787 a factory was established at Moscow for the manu-

facture of English earthenware (which was largely used in Russia), by an Englishman named Gardner, but no evidence is available as to the success of this venture, and no known specimens of the ware are extant.

The first person to make English earthenware in Paris was Charles Potter, who established the "Manufacture du Prince de Galles" in 1790.

Potter made the ordinary cream-coloured ware, together with some essays in fancy bodies; but he directed his attention chiefly to the development of transfer printing. He was making satisfactory progress, when the revolution of '93 necessitated the closing down of the business. After a few years' interval, however, the manufactory was reopened, and continued successfully for some years.

In 1820 Hall, an Englishman, founded the pottery at Gien. There is no direct evidence that Hall was a Staffordshire man; but as he came to Gien from Montereau, where he worked with Clarke and Shaw, there can be little doubt about the fact. Moreover, Hall made pottery according to methods exclusively employed in Staffordshire, excepting, of course, those of the foreign emigrants. The business prospered under Hall's direction, and after his death the old works was demolished and a new one erected. At this works imitations and reproductions of old Rouen and Strasburg ware were made, but the manufacture of this ware was soon discontinued. Specimens of "Gien" faïence, however, are now valuable. The factory is still working, but only common goods are made.

Staffordshire workmen can be traced to almost every known potting centre. We only hear of these incidentally and casually, but the unrecorded number must be enormous. It is only occasionally, however, as in the case of the Herculaneum

Pottery, Liverpool, that we hear of a wholesale engagement of Staffordshire workmen.

In 1796 the founders of the Herculaneum Pottery engaged Ralph Mansfield, of Burslem, as manager. He took with him from the Potteries forty workpeople, who were transported in a boat, by the canal, then newly cut by Brindley. Savants are careful to distinguish (rightly, perhaps) Herculaneum ware from that of Staffordshire; but, excepting the mere locality of manufacture, it would be difficult to say what merit the ware possessed that did not belong to Staffordshire, seeing that the whole staff, excepting unskilled labourers, were imported bodily from Staffordshire, with constant subsequent additions until the close of the works.

If the question was worth elucidation, and of sufficient importance to repay the trouble of research, there is no doubt whatever that the Staffordshire man would be found to have influenced the development of English potteries in all parts of the kingdom. Wherever we take the trouble to investigate, we find a Staffordshire man either at the helm, the compass, or the foretop, with a plentiful sprinkling of Staffordshire men among the able seamen.

In Bristol, Joseph Ring engaged Anthony Hassells, of Shelton, in 1786, to initiate the manufacture of earthenware in that city. We have no record (as in the case of Liverpool) of numbers of workmen migrating in a body; but we know that Hassells was under the necessity of obtaining the services of Staffordshire throwers, turners, and placers, before he could succeed in producing the delicate and neatly turned ware, for which Ring is praised, and Hassells practically ignored.

To return to foreign potteries, in Spain we find that the earthenware originated from Staffordshire, by Staffordshire men;

and among the lists of potters we find English names, such as Pickman, Sandeman, and McDougal.

The potteries in the Colonies—too many to enumerate were nearly all founded by Staffordshire men. In Australia we find the case of Rhodes, who left Stoke in the middle of the last century, migrated to America, back again to England, and drifted to Australia in search of gold—finding instead, good clay. He had no kiln-builders accessible, but built a clumsy kiln himself, which grew red-hot outside before it would fire the ware, to the indignation of the neighbours, who protested angrily. He altered his kiln; and alone, away from any centre of potting, with no prepared materials to hand, he made parian, china, and Rockingham. He obtained a medal at the Inter-Colonial Exhibition of 1867. His business was fairly remunerative, but he was impulsive, and was, moreover, of a wandering disposition, so he abandoned his business in 1874; he was, nevertheless, the pioneer of potting in Australia.

In America, also, the industry of potting has been built up by Staffordshire men. It is more difficult to trace instances among successful potters, the commercial conditions of the country tending to the emolument of the capitalist, and, too frequently, the elimination of the real builder of the business. In 1766 we find Bartlem emigrating from Staffordshire to South Carolina. Bartlem began to make pottery, "but was unsuccessful." It is not recorded whether his lack of success was in the making of pottery, or in the making of it remunerative. We are inclined to think the latter was the case and not the former, as the Staffordshire potter generally knows his business.

But while in America there are a number of Staffordshire men who have made pottery and have *not* made fortunes, there is also a fair proportion who have made their fortunes and are

making good pottery. The millionaire potter who is merely a tradesman (and this class includes Staffordshire men) does not call for notice. James Carr left Shelton in 1844 and went to America. He commenced by making druggists' jars and ordinary wares, but gradually enlarged his business and improved his productions. He received a medal at the recent Paris Exhibition. He has made a large fortune, and makes goods of a class which, if generally developed among American potters, will eventually destroy British exports of pottery to America.

Henry Brunt, of Penkhull, has a similar record. Of the rank and file of Staffordshire potters in America, they are necessarily "unrecorded and unknown." To all intents and purposes, they are American potters. There are numbers of the class of William Bromley, who went from Goss, at Stoke, to Ireland, to "place the manufacture of Belleek on a successful basis." Having done this, he is invited to America to "assist Mr. Hart Brewer in his development of Belleek ware," and later "associates himself with Messrs. Willett for the same purpose."

So, although William Bromley is possibly no genius, and probably makes no claim to that distinction, yet he is, beyond doubt, a capable potter, who understands his business. He is an instance of that practical common sense which is characteristic of the Staffordshire potter. He goes to Ireland for the purpose of putting the historical factory of Belleek upon a sound basis, and does it. He weeds out their faults of potting and improves their methods, as Anthony Hassells did for Ring at Bristol. The mark of the Staffordshire potter is everywhere.

CHAPTER XXV

"BIDDLE" MOOR

"Theer's lots o' sorts o' different folk in th' world. Theer's niggers an' Frenchmen, Cheyneymen an' Irishmen, Scotchmen an' cannibals, Englishmen, Shropshiremen, Darby chaps an' Biddle Moor folk."—*Old Staffordshire saying.*

BIDDULPH, or "Biddle," as it is locally called, is about five miles from Tunstall. Apart from its contiguity to the Potteries, it is connected by many links of custom, history, and trade. The old Hall, now in ruins, is sufficiently interesting to demand notice. It was built by Francis Biddulphe, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. John Ward, in his "History of Stoke-on-Trent," gives a full pedigree of the family, stating that they derived their lineage from Richard the Forester, one of the tenants, *in capite*, named in the Domesday Book. His son was the renowned Ormus le Guidon, Lord of Darlaston. According to Sampson Erdswicke, the Biddulph lands were granted after the Norman Conquest by William the Conqueror to this same Ormus le Guidon, whose son Alwrid inherited the adjoining lands of Knypersley. The genealogy of this family (fully described by Erdswicke) is apart from the purpose of this book. It is sufficient to say that owing to the failure of heirs male the estate became divided, and passed into several other families. By the marriage of William de Biddulphe to the heiress of Richard Greenway, the family regained the estate. William was the ancestor of Francis, the builder of the Hall,

where the family lived in peace until the troublous times of the Civil War. When Sir William Brereton, the Parliamentary general, broke up the siege of Nantwich he marched across to this neighbourhood, staying at Astbury for the night.

His nephew William, second Lord Brereton, was a staunch Royalist, and hearing of the defeat of the besiegers of Nantwich, and doubting the capacity of his own mansion for successful resistance, fled with his family and retainers to Biddulph Hall, which was put in a state of defence. Bags of sand, bedding, and other materials were arranged behind the walls and windows, and stores of arms and ammunition collected. Local tradition says that had Lord Brereton remained at his own house, his uncle would, for the time, have conveniently forgotten his existence. He was, however, so angry at the gathering of Royalist families at Biddulph Hall that he marched forthwith from Stafford to take it. This would seem extremely unlikely, as it is certain that General Brereton came straight to Biddulph from Astbury, which is considerably out of his way from Stafford, while it is directly on the road from Nantwich; where Colonel George Monk had just been taken and safely lodged in the Tower. At Astbury the Parliamentary troops turned the fine old church into a stable, broke the stained-glass windows, pulled down the organ, and burned it in an adjoining field, which is known as the "Organ Field" to this day. They marched, it is said, over Congleton Edge (a very unlikely route from Stafford) and invested the Hall, quartering their troops on the neighbouring tenantry.

The artillery was planted on Congleton Edge, but little damage was done from that eminence and distance. There was an old song, of which, unfortunately, only fragments can be traced, describing Lord Brereton, within sight of his uncle

standing by the cannon on the Edge, and hesitating to attack :

> Yonder stands my uncle, but he will not come near,
> Because he is a Roundhead, and I a Cavalier.

And—

> O let them crop their hair close; but we will crop their ears,
> To show the canting Roundheads that we are Cavaliers.

The siege seems to have lasted a matter of three months ; but although closely invested, the Hall does not appear to have suffered from the artillery for a considerable time, and the defenders do not seem to have been short of provisions. Tradition, again, has it that there was an underground passage by which a servant, appropriately named "Trusty," had ingress and egress, and that the surrounding tenantry took care to keep the inmates well supplied with necessaries. The story is altogether too hackneyed to be taken seriously, especially as diligent search has been repeatedly made for the "underground passage," and no trace has been discovered.

The Parliamentarians changed their position several times with very little effect, and eventually sent to Stafford for a large cannon called "Roaring Meg," and the Hall was for some time ineffectually bombarded with this machine, which appears, from its name, to have been more noisy than dangerous. At length a ball struck the end of a beam supporting the main portion of the building, and Lady Brereton, fearing for the safety of the inmates, implored them to capitulate, which they did on the condition that they were granted "quarter for life." The prisoners were Lord and Lady Brereton and their son, Captain Biddulph, three sons of Mr. Bellot of Moreton Hall, Captains Shakerley and Minshall, Mr. Lockit, and 150 soldiers. The victors took

PLATE, POOLE AND LAKIN ; BASALTES CREAM-JUG AND CREAM WARE SUGAR-BOX
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

STATUETTE OF LION, UNMARKED. HEIGHT 9 INCHES
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

three hundred stands of arms, sacked the Hall, and bore their plunder to Stafford.

It is interesting to consider the cumbrous character of the artillery of this period. It is almost inconceivable to us, who know the power and precision of modern ordnance, that ordinary dwelling houses, however substantially built, could withstand bombardment for weeks. Major-General Brereton had a busy time in Staffordshire. He bombarded Eccleshall Castle, Tutbury, Patshull, Dudley, Dunston, had a shot at Swynnerton Hall, and sacked, or took indemnity from Keele, and many other Royalist houses. Biddulph Hall was not rendered actually uninhabitable by the besiegers, but it is said that the country folk finished the sack initiated by the Parliamentary forces. They even burned the doors for the sake of the massive iron hinges, and left nothing but bare walls. The estate was forfeited by act of Parliament in 1652, but was restored to the Biddulph family after the accession of Charles II., and the family held it, together with Knypersley, until the extinction of male heirs.

Tradition tells of a certain Colonel Biddulph, of the East India Company (probably about 1698 or 1700), who returned from India to the Biddulph district, bringing with him a large retinue of native Indian servants. These settled on the moor, about a mile away from the Hall. They were of both sexes, and they intermarried; occasionally making a match with a rustic Staffordshire damsel or swain. As years went on these mixed marriages became more frequent, but the outsiders were always absorbed by the "Biddle Moor folk." It would be too much to say that they ever learnt the English language, but they lost their own, and to-day they speak a *patois* unlike anything else. Although of late years the opening of collieries, ironworks, and fustian factories has found employ-

three hundred stands of arms, sacked the Hall, and bore their plunder to Stafford.

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ment for many, and broken down the rigid racial line of demarcation, they are still, physically and morally, a race apart. In the early part of the nineteenth century they followed (in a rough fashion) agricultural pursuits, which they varied by gathering sand, which was and is abundant in the neighbourhood of the moor. This they carried on rude carts, or on the backs of pack-mules to the potteries, where they found a ready market, many kinds of pottery requiring to be baked in beds of sand. They preferred "kind" to coin, and took in payment "seconds," or inferior crockery, which they conveyed to market on "fair days" to the country towns of Cheshire, Shropshire, Derbyshire, and remote parts of Staffordshire, selling their wares in the market-place by a rough kind of auction. A "Biddle Moor" crockery-hawker would spread his wares on the ground and fix a rough box or packing-case in the centre. This he would hammer violently with a sturdy stick by way of punctuating his remarks. He would speak in rapid, shrill, staccato tones, "chopping" his syllables in such a fashion that his auditors generally understood nothing but the price, which, however, he usually managed to articulate with sufficient distinctness. We have heard a "Biddle Moor" man cry his wares something like this:

"Näar'th'n! näar'th'n! näar'th'n! E' yo wummn's wäant crowks cum by's'm 'n'ave yer mäals däac'nt. 'Ere's six pläats [here he bangs his stick on the box] wäan poi-d'sh [bang] two baoull's—the pronunciation of this word cannot be suggested by mere letters—[bang] 'n'ajoog noth'n guarr'ntéad [bang] if y' find a säand'n 'mong'm bring it back 'n' äa'l change it [bang] äa'l tak' fow-a-shill'n fur'th' lot 'ea 'ere's a teyp't, fow-a shill'n', fow-a shill'n'—three'n'nine—three'n'six—three shill'n' [bang]—tew'n'nine—tew'n'six—tew shilling [very slowly]—wan-

'n'six—wan'n'thrae—wan'n'tew—wan'n'apenny 'ere [bang] a shill'n' [bang, bang] taks th' lot."*

"Biddle Moor" hawkers are rarer to-day. Possibly the fact that employment is plentiful nearer home, and the difficulty of obtaining "seconds" caused by the manufacturers finding wholesale markets for them, may account for this. The spread of industry and the extension of the opportunities of intercourse will doubtless destroy eventually the individuality of the "Biddle Moor folk." Morally they are at present divided into two diametrically opposite sections; the one being sensual, secretly lawless, and cruel, and the other prudish and puritanical to an extreme. These latter are Methodists, and the change in these—fortunately the majority—is doubtless due to the visit of John Wesley in 1761. The Rev. J. B. Dyson, in his "History of Wesleyan Methodism in the Congleton Circuit," says that Wesley whilst walking to Congleton "suddenly stood still, gazed upon the lovely scenery, and then, in his fine clear voice, gave out, as if to a congregation,

> Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood,
> For Jesus is bringing Biddulph sinners to God.

The same writer says, "Biddulph Moor, which lies four or five miles east from Congleton, is a hilly and barren district,

* Translation: "Now then, now then, now then! Here, you women who want crocks, come and buy some and have your meals decent. Here's six plates, one pie-dish, two bowls, and a jug. Nothing guaranteed. If you find a sound one among them bring it back, and I'll change it. I'll take four shillings for the lot. Here, here's a teapot. Four shillings! four shillings! three and nine—three and six—three shillings—two and nine—two and six—two shillings—one and six—one and three—one and two—one and a penny. Here, a shilling takes the lot." There is no punctuation but the banging of the stick, and by the end of the sale the top of the box is generally beaten to mere fibre.

said to have been originally peopled by foreigners. For the truth of this we do not vouch, but it is certain that there is a peculiarity, even at this day, in the manners and habits of this people which one might seek for in vain in surrounding localities. At the date to which our narrative refers they were in a state of very imperfect civilisation. . . . Their dwellings were little better than Irish cabins. Often a cow or two, with a pig or a donkey, found shelter with their owner under the same roof. The earth was their only floor, while lumps of coal were made to supply the place of chairs. At the same time the paucity of their intellectual attainments was as extreme as their moral degradation." This was written in 1856. William White, in his "History of Staffordshire," says, "The influence of Methodism has long since softened their native character. It is also said that they had formerly such an aversion to a military life, that, during the late war, several of them actually disabled themselves by striking off their own thumbs with an axe, sooner than run the risk of being balloted into the Militia." White's work was published in 1834, and the "peculiarities" of the "Biddle Moor folk" still survive. They are no longer totally isolated, for the encroachment of their "even Christian" on their moor and their own occasional removal nearer the forges and collieries have to some extent separated them as a community; but a stranger would at once notice their swarthy and saturnine visages, even if he knew nothing of their history. They have (as might be inferred from the incident of the thumbs) no reputation for physical courage, and they are said to be vindictive and revengeful. They were in past times reputed to be expert poachers of hares and rabbits, but were said to have an aversion to game birds and chickens. They were cunning in the training of dogs, and frequently entertained

themselves with dog fights and cock fights. Coursing of rabbits and hares was with them a favourite and common sport, and it is asserted, on excellent authority, that it was their custom to blind the wretched hare or rabbit in one eye with a hot needle to cause it to run in circles when pursued by the dogs. It is pleasant to know that these people have their defender, and that, as time strides on, the grounds for defence afford more cause for justification. Mr. Joseph Cassilis, writing just ten years ago, says, "For myself, I have always found the inhabitants of this district a peaceful, honest-hearted, and happy community, and I firmly believe that once on friendly terms with a Biddulph Moor man he will stick to you 'through thick and thin.'"

Mr. Cassilis doubts whether the chronicled descriptions of Biddulph Moor would hold good at any time, and is sure that it would not hold good in 1896.

We have in 1905 and 1906 made repeated pilgrimages to the Biddulph Moor district with a view to the study of this unique people, and although, owing to extended intercourse and the influence of Methodism, they compare not unfavourably with their neighbours as law-abiding citizens, we are still inclined to agree with the old saying that there are Frenchmen, Englishmen, etc., *and* "Biddle Moor folk."

In the early part of the last century Biddulph Grange was built by Mr. John Bateman, D.L., and the house, its gardens, and grounds form one of the chief attractions of North Staffordshire. The Batemans were all enthusiastic floriculturists, and the rarest trees, plants, and shrubs were obtained. A part of the gardens was laid out after the design of the well-known "Willow pattern plate," the trees, bridge, stream, and pagodas being reproduced with great exactness. This Mr. Bateman was

the author of the well-known work on "Mexican Orchids." He is reported to have sunk a large portion of his fortune in its production, all the best-known painters of flowers being requisitioned for its illustration. Orchids were very little known at the time of its publication, which, beyond question, was the chief factor in popularising the culture of this remarkable flower. It had, too, the effect of causing Pilsbury, Mussill, and other ceramic artists to employ the orchid largely as a motive for pottery decoration, until at last it was used *ad nauseam*.

The Bateman family purchased the dilapidated old Hall, one part of which is still habitable, and was the occasional residence of Mr. Robert Bateman, son of the former owner. Mr. Robert Bateman was a painter of much talent, and is well known by his picture of "Saul and the Witch of Endor," which was in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1879.

MINTON'S ART-POTTERY STUDIO
QUEEN'S GATE, KENSINGTON GORE : W.
Photo-Litho Whiteman & Bass London
ENTER BY QUEEN'S GATE ENTRANCE OF
ROYAL HORTICULTURAL GARDENS.

BUSINESS CARD: DESIGNED BY H. S. MARKS, R.A.

CHAPTER XXVI

TOWARDS the close of the 'sixties Mr. W. S. Coleman, who was a well-known illustrator and a capable water-colour painter, began to make experiments in the decoration of pottery, with the view of taking up pottery-decoration as a profession. Finding it inconvenient to pursue his experiments so far away as London from the scene of the practical working of pottery, he applied to Messrs. Copeland to give him the necessary facilities for furthering the scheme which he had in view, and went to Staffordshire forthwith. He does not appear to have been, in fact was not, satisfied with the facilities which Messrs. Copeland were able to offer him, for a few months later he made overtures to Mr. Colin Minton Campbell, who received him, so to speak, with open arms, and gave him the use of a commodious studio at the end of the china works overlooking the town of Stoke.

Mr. G. W. Rhead, who was then a lad of fifteen, and a young apprentice on the works, was sent to Coleman's studio for the purpose of giving him instruction in the practical working of pot colours. Coleman, however, made such rapid progress that he very soon began to teach his quondam instructor, and, during the year 1870 and part of 1871, produced a series of plaques, bowls, fireplace-slabs, etc., so charmingly fresh in character, so entirely different in treatment from anything previously seen in the Potteries, that they at once made a deep impression, even amongst the workers, who were not prone to the reception of new ideas, and who viewed with mistrust any innovation or departure from the beaten track.

Coleman's earliest work was done in under-glaze colours upon the bisque, and glazed by hand with the brush, not dipped, the painting being done with water as a medium and the glaze mixed with turps, so as not to disturb the painting. By this means he could distribute the glaze as he chose. The delicate parts of the painting, such as the flesh and faces of figures, would be glazed thinly, while cobalt blue, which is a strong colour, requiring and absorbing more glaze, would be glazed more thickly.

The small tile, given in the illustration facing page 350, of a seated figure holding a mirror, is an example of work done in this method; but it is by no means, and in no sense, a typical example of Coleman's work, and is only interesting as being one of the very earliest experiments which Coleman made in under-glaze painting, done either prior to or during the time he was with Copeland, as Copeland's name is impressed on the back of the tile.

The examples which remain most clear in our memory (we shall never forget the impression on first entering the studio,

and seeing these charming things ranged upon a shelf round the room) are a plate with a duck and ducklings, completely finished in under-glaze colours and glazed in a soft glaze, imparting a beautiful soft quality to the colours. This plate subsequently passed into the possession of a well-known connoisseur, Mr. Charles Magniac. A coarse earthenware plate with a cock and young chickens, vigorously drawn with what appeared to be a pen line, and, of a somewhat later period, a charming head of a pretty child reclining upon a couch, of which there are several versions, including a small trial tile, about 4 in. by 3 in. There were also a number of plaques of fanciful subjects of heads, some executed upon a body with a roughened, granulated surface, which he caused to be specially prepared. The work of this, his earlier, period, when he relied exclusively upon under-glaze colours, must undoubtedly be accounted the most satisfactory as pottery decoration, since the quality of under-glaze, which is the result of the complete fusion of the colours with the glaze, is superior to anything which enamel colours can give. Coleman, however, who was a born colourist, and had a preference for the brighter pigments, became impatient of the somewhat limited range which under-glaze colours afforded. He preferred the brilliant turquoise enamel (for which Minton's were famous) to the paler hues of the under-glaze. He even preferred the bright enamel blue to the more sober though infinitely more splendid tones of under-glaze cobalt. He therefore gradually abandoned the use of under-glaze colours, and his latest works were painted almost entirely in enamel colours with the exception of the strong brown outline, which was done under-glaze, and which was never abandoned, and occasionally one or two other colours, such as orange, which in under-glaze is very brilliant.

We much regret our inability to illustrate a worthy specimen of Coleman's work, especially his earlier pieces, which, together with the bulk of the productions of Minton's Studio, appear to have been dispersed, and untraceable.

Coleman was an enthusiastic naturalist and an extremely powerful plant draughtsman. During the 'sixties, and earlier, he had written and illustrated several works dealing with natural history, amongst which were "British Butterflies," and "Our Woodlands, Heaths, and Hedges," published by Routledge. He also drew the illustrations to the Rev. J. G. Wood's "Common Objects of the Country." He collaborated with Harrison Weir, Wolf and others in the admirably illustrated "Wood's Natural History," and his illustrations to this work, although not possessing the fine sense of style of Weir's, yet had a charm and individuality quite unique.

To the second period of Coleman's work on pottery belong two large fireplace slabs 3 ft. 6 in. by 12 in. painted with a peacock and a trogon, and drawn in his own inimitable style, both these subjects giving him ample opportunity for indulging in the brilliant tints which were so attractive to him.

About this time, during the year 1870, he painted what he always considered his *chef-d'œuvre* in pottery, a large plaque, about thirty inches in diameter, with tropical plants (American aloes, etc.), and a flying bird, with an orange background, a scheme of colour which he was very partial to, on account of the fine quality of the under-glaze orange. It was done in greater part under-glaze, but finished in enamel; unfortunately, as it turned out, as the plaque, which was of unusual size, split in the enamel kiln. We well remember his exclamation of intense disappointment on his coming in the morning and finding the plaque in two pieces. It was an instance, so common in human

TRIAL TILE, BY W. S. COLEMAN
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

PANEL, THE FALCONER, DESIGNED BY H. S. MARKS, R.A.
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

experience, of the thing upon which we build our most cherished hopes being foredoomed, as it were, to failure.

We have now to direct the reader's attention to an important work in tiles done in London a year or two previous to the period which we have been considering. We refer to the decoration of the grill-room at South Kensington Museum, designed by Sir Edward, then Mr., Poynter, and executed by some of the lady students of the National Art Training School. It was the success of this work which led the authorities at South Kensington to consider whether some means could not be found for the establishment of an Art Pottery Studio in London which would provide employment for such lady students of the Training School as desired it. This was one of the numerous schemes which were mooted at the time for the employment of women of the middle and upper middle classes. Messrs. Minton, through whom the work in the grill-room and other important ceramic work in the Museum was done, were approached in the matter. A five-years' lease was granted by the Commissioners of the 1851 Exhibition, of a plot of land situated close by the Albert Hall, immediately between the Royal College of Music, which was then in process of construction, and the conservatory of the Royal Horticultural Gardens. A studio was erected upon this site, with enamel kiln for firing, and in the spring of 1871 was opened, under the art directorship of Coleman, having the twofold object of establishing a better standard of taste in pottery decoration, and, as previously stated, of offering an opportunity of remunerative employment to the students of the National Art Training School.

The Studio was established under the happiest auspices. No project, surely, was ever launched with greater opportunities. It soon became one of the show-places of London, and was visited

by a number of the most highly placed personages, amongst whom were the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia (afterwards the Emperor and Empress Frederick), the King of the Belgians, the Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne, as well as many people distinguished in literature and the arts.

A number of students from South Kensington (the greater proportion ladies) were soon attacted to the place, and a variety of things were produced—plaques, vases, bowls, pilgrim-bottles, and tiles for fireplaces and other decorations, amongst the most successful of which were : the large plaque designed by Coleman, referred to in the earlier portion of this chapter, of tropical plants and bird, with yellow ground, of which a number of replicas were made ; a two-handled bowl, with three feet, about 12 in. high by 15 in. broad, the shape of which was designed by Coleman and decorated by him with fish and water-plants : this also was repeated a number of times ; two " dragon " bottles designed, or rather adapted from the Japanese, by G. W. Rhead ; a small long-necked bottle, also adapted by G. W. Rhead from a Satsuma vase in the South Kensington Museum ; a pair of circular bottles with a flattened surface, about 18 in. high, decorated with plants and birds in turquoise and blue with black background, from designs by Coleman, one of which is given in the illustration facing page 356.

During this, the earlier period of the Studio, an important decorative work was carried out for Eaton Hall, Cheshire, the seat of the Duke of Westminster. This work included a long horizontal fireplace slab with a frieze of figures in mediæval costume, representing the signs of the Zodiac, designed by H. S. Marks, R.A. (of which a number of replicas were afterwards made) ; a series of panel slabs, illustrating Shakespeare's Seven Ages, painted in colours with gold background, also

designed by H. S. Marks (of this series also a number of replicas were made); a large panel of tiles, for the bath-room, of tropical water-plants and birds, painted by G. W. Rhead from Coleman's design, and a number of smaller panels of plants on a buff ground.

It was about this time that the Criterion Theatre and Restaurant was being completed, and it was intended to decorate the restaurant with tiles. It was well understood that the proprietors, Messrs. Spiers & Pond, together with their architect, Mr. Verity, were desirous that Messrs. Minton should execute the work at the Criterion, they having had several of their restaurants decorated by Messrs. W. B. Simpson & Sons, and wishing for a change of style. Coleman therefore submitted a small rough sketch of the general colour scheme which he proposed to carry out, together with an enlargement of one of the figures, a Cupid pursuing a butterfly, a favourite idea of his. It was sufficiently evident, however, that Coleman's heart was not in the work. He was engrossed with his plaques, for which he found a ready sale at prices varying from thirty to fifty pounds, and even more. He was rather of an indolent habit of mind, and seemed to avoid the mental effort necessary to the successful carrying out of an important decorative work. The commission was therefore entrusted to Messrs. Simpson, who carried out the work, thus depriving the Studio of an important opportunity which might very well have been taken advantage of.

About this period (the close of 1872) Mr. John Eyre, who is at present a prominent member of the Royal Society of British Artists, and an able painter in water colours, and who at that time had recently completed his National Scholarship at South Kensington, had returned to Staffordshire, and was

casting about for an opportunity of turning his abilities to account. Mr. Eyre made an application to Messrs. Minton, with the result that he was engaged to come to the Studio in London to assume the threefold duties of designer and painter, of general overlooker or foreman, and to superintend the firing

MAJOLICA DISH, BY G. WOOLLISCROFT RHEAD

of the kiln, which had practically become a necessity to the Studio, on account of the various inconveniences incidental to the sending of the ware backwards and forwards to Stoke to be fired, which had been done up to this period.

An extremely able member of the Studio was Mr. Edmond G. Reuter, who was a native of Geneva, and had migrated

to London for the purpose of study at South Kensington, finding, doubtless, better opportunities there than his native place afforded. Mr. Reuter never found, either at the Studio, or afterwards at the works at Stoke, whither he went at the final breaking up of the Studio, opportunity for the exercise of his singularly original talent. His experience was a remarkable instance of entire lack of perception, of complete inability on the part of a great firm, or organisation, to turn to account the material to hand, and to make the most of it. We have here an instance of a man of unique capability employed, during a long period, upon the merest trivialities, work which could have no possible interest for him, hoping against hope, and finally losing all heart and interest in his daily occupation, seeking, and finding relief, and exercising his inventive faculties in the evenings in the decoration of his own home, transforming an entirely commonplace dwelling into a very oasis of delightful interest.

Mr. Reuter subsequently returned to Geneva, partly, however, on account of his wife's indifferent health, and has since made a considerable reputation as an illuminator. Mr. William Morris "discovered" him, and, regularly up to his (Morris's) death, provided him with work in illumination and caligraphy.

Prominent amongst the ladies of the Studio was Miss Hannah Barlow, who had a considerable love for, and facility in drawing animals. Her interest in animals, indeed, was the source of much consternation among her feminine fellow-workers, from her habit of bringing mice, frogs, and other live stock to the Studio in her pockets. Miss Barlow, like Mr. Reuter, never found at the Studio an outlet for her artistic energies. After a comparatively short period she accepted an appointment at Doulton's, where she found in their grey stone-

ware a material which was exactly suited to her very individual talent.

During this time Coleman continued to produce his plaques, which increased in popular favour. The advent of Mr. Eyre as general overlooker was a convenience to him; it relieved him of a part of his responsibilities and enabled him to devote his time almost exclusively to his own work, in which he was obviously more interested. From this time he gradually lost touch with the Studio, and finally, about the end of 1873, severed his connection with it entirely as Art Director, although he continued to send his work there for the purpose of being fired.

This event marked the close of the Studio's first and far more successful period. The work, however, was popular, and as a consequence the dealers continued their support. It was therefore necessary to appoint some one to fill the post which Coleman had vacated. This was done, in the person of Mr. Matthew Elden, a singular and wayward creature who originally hailed from the Potteries, had been the friend and fellow-student of the elder Kipling, and was one of Whistler's earliest and most enthusiastic supporters. Elden came to London at an early period of his career, and, during his connection with the Training School at South Kensington, took part in the execution of the modelled decorations then in progress for the façade of the new Wedgwood Institute at Burslem. We believe we are right in saying that Elden was first entrusted with the work, but was superseded by Rowland Morris, who proved himself better fitted to carry out a work of such importance. The majority, if not all the panels illustrating the processes of potting, were designed by Elden and carried out by Morris. The two panels of "moulding" and "coal-mining" illustrated at page 226 bear the signatures of both Elden and Morris. The three sketch

PILGRIM BOTTLE, DESIGNED BY W. S. COLEMAN. BLACK GROUND, FLOWERS IN TURQUOISE AND BLUE
Collection of John Eyre, R.B.A.

DRAGON BOTTLE IN UNDER-GLAZE BLUE, MINTON'S ART POTTERY STUDIO
Collection of G. W. Rhead, senr.

models also reproduced, at page 360, give a very excellent idea of Elden's peculiar powers, his qualities, and his limitations. He possessed a lively invention, a fine sense of style, and great facility, but he lacked the power of carrying his ideas to completion. His work at Minton's Studio may be summed up in the one word *failure*. He was for ever experimenting: inventing devices for this and "dodges" for that. He introduced an odorator or "spray" for the purpose of laying flat tints of colour upon the ware, and tint upon tint, to produce "quality," and covered everything in the place with this system of tinting. If he happened upon occasion to achieve any measure of success, he couldn't rest, apparently, until he had spoiled it. He produced numbers of sketches, showing considerable power up to the point to which they were carried; but these were never carried beyond the sketch stage, and probably never intended to be completed. He was something of a hustler, even in those pre-hustling days, before the genus "hustler" had come into being, and even contemplated the partitioning of the place into stalls or pens, to prevent conversation between the workers, and thus obtain a greater proportion of work from each person. Elden's individuality was as strong in its own way as that of Coleman, but it is curious to note the difference in the tone and morale of the place which was brought about by the introduction of a different personality. The earlier period remains a pleasant memory to all who took part in it, and is in the strongest possible contrast to the ones which followed.

Another member of the Studio whose work possessed exceptional interest was Mr. Edward Hammond, whose somewhat wayward character had some sort of affinity with that of Elden. Mr. Hammond produced among other things a set of tiles, of musicians in mediæval costumes, somewhat after the manner

of Marks, but finer in character. These designs were etched upon copper by Hammond in a strong outline, and were taken up at this stage by Elden, who supplied precisely that quality which Hammond was unable to impart, and, on the other hand, the outlines possessed more character than Elden's work displayed. The union of the two men's work was therefore in this instance most happy, as each supplied what the other lacked. The tiles were produced in large quantities, the outlines printed from the copper plates, and the shading finished by hand. They were afterwards modelled at Stoke in low relief, and glazed with a blue or brown glaze. Of these also many were produced and sold.

There can be no doubt that the mental malady which subsequently overtook Elden had begun to do its work even during the time that he remained at the Studio. The present writer remembers being presented by Elden to his friend and idol Whistler, at a conversazione at the Old Hogarth Club. Elden was in a shabby evening dress with his shirt front *literally* as black as his coat. The poor distracted soul ended his days in an asylum, having previously expressed a wish to be buried in the "nick of the table."

The Elden régime lasted a matter of eighteen months or two years, during which period Mr. Eyre had seceded from the place, finding himself completely out of sympathy with Elden's methods. There was still another stage, which in many respects was even more unsatisfactory than the last. Messrs. Minton opened up negotiations with Colonel Stuart-Wortley, an exceedingly able amateur photographer, who took portraits of his friends (heads and figures ; chiefly heads, however) in mediæval and fancy costume. These were copied, on the imitative system, in large numbers upon large plaques, and very well copied too,

from the imitative point of view. It will, however, be sufficiently obvious that this kind of thing had no sort of affinity with fine art. The photos were excellent, as photos, but, leaving unanswered the nice question as to whether photography has been helpful or harmful to art (for ourselves we are convinced that it has been entirely harmful, and at best is but a convenience), there is an unfathomable gulf between this and the great Italian traditions bequeathed to us by Gubbio, Urbino, and Castel Durante.

The move was a leap in the dark; it was one of those feverish actions which men take in a moment of stress and difficulty. Elden had left nothing but a legacy of failure and incompetence. Mr. Colin Campbell had arrived one morning to find a huge pile of bowls decorated with a coarse, vulgar design in far-off imitation of Coleman's beautiful fish-bowl, and "blown" upon by Elden's odorating process. These were sold *en bloc* to Messrs. Mortlock for thirty shillings each. Elden, finding that his own work did not particularly please, had fallen into the error of trying to imitate Coleman, instead of developing his own quite genuine individuality. The dealers were beginning, indeed had begun, to look askance upon the place, and the "photograph" was considered the panacea for all the ills that the Studio had become heir to. It is easy to see that the end could not be much longer delayed. The workers arrived one morning in the summer of 1875 to find the place reduced to a heap of ashes. The firing of the kiln was the cause, and the accident of the fire was seized upon as a decent excuse for closing the place.

The failure can scarcely be said to be Messrs. Minton's fault. The head of the firm was not a potter, as was Josiah Wedgwood and his own predecessor Herbert Minton; he was

simply an employer of labour—all the difference in the world between the two things. He was largely in the hands of his representatives. He acted as best he could according to his lights. He had shown himself enterprising and broad-minded in the encouragement which he gave to Coleman in the first instance. Firms are, however, necessarily *im*personal, and the one condition of fine art of any sort is that it must be *personal.* The Studio was the creation of Coleman's unique individuality; that individuality removed, it was sapped of its life-blood; it lingered on for a while, but it was inevitable that it should die a natural death.

During what may be termed the "photographic" period, and by way of strengthening the Studio by the infusion of fresh blood, Dr. Christopher Dresser, who was a well-known designer and ornamentist of the neo-Gothic school of Talbert and Pugin, was invited to supply designs. Dr. Dresser produced a number of designs of a semi-humorous character, which, however, can scarcely be said fairly to represent his powers, which were very considerable. The only example which remains in our memory is a small circular bottle with a flat surface, upon which was represented a rencontre of two cats on a garden wall, with a moon behind. It was impossible not to feel that this was a little vulgar and commonplace in character. Mr. E. G. Reuter, in a spirit of derision, and with the idea of showing the authorities that they were roaming all over the place for the purpose of finding what they already possessed to hand, produced a frieze of monkeys forming an interlacing pattern, the two hands of each monkey grasping respectively the tail and the tippet of the hood of the monkey in front. It was quite mediæval in character, extremely refined, and an excellent piece of ornament. Elden, who, whatever his limitations, was

SKETCH MODELS BY MATTHEW ELDEN FOR PANELS FOR THE WEDGWOOD INSTITUTE, BURSLEM

certainly not wanting in perception, grasped at once the absurdity of the situation. The incident led to Mr. Reuter's engagement at the works at Stoke for the extraordinary and exceptional period of twenty-one years!

Minton's Studio was an interesting experiment which deserved a better fate. It produced during the earlier period a good deal of very excellent work. It directly created that interest or "craze" for pottery decoration which became almost universal throughout the country during the 'seventies, and, amongst a good deal of downright bad work, a certain proportion of good work was done. Nearly everybody took up pot-painting for a time, and a considerable business was done both in London and elsewhere in the supply of materials and firing. It was, indeed, more than a craze; it became a positive fever. Almost any rubbish found a ready sale, and the character of the periodical exhibitions of amateurs' work at Messrs. Howell & James's, in Regent Street, led George Augustus Sala to exclaim in a spirit of righteous indignation, "Oh, for a good, honest kitchen poker!" The Studio attracted a number of very capable amateurs, amongst whom was Mr. A. B. Donaldson, who, however, being a water-colour painter of considerable originality and distinction, can scarcely be considered an amateur, but rather as a painter who took up pottery as a pleasant alternative to his work in water colour. Mr. Donaldson produced a number of very interesting pieces. Mr. W. de Morgan, the well-known potter, was an occasional visitor to the Studio, but only for the purpose of taking advantage of the convenience of the enamel kiln. Mr. J. D. Rochfort was a man of leisure who adopted pottery purely as a recreation, and who also did good work.

Another important result which must not be forgotten is

that Minton's Studio most probably, we may say certainly, provided the incentive to Messrs. Doulton to take up art work in pottery. It was the pioneer in London, although Messrs. W. B. Simpson had already been doing most excellent work, chiefly, however, in tiles.

We have dwelt at some length upon this "incident" or "offshoot" of the Staffordshire potter's craft. The story of Minton's Studio is told here, we believe, for the first time in print, and it seemed to us that its doings and influence were certainly of sufficient importance to justify the telling.

Coleman died a little more than a year ago. There was the usual short obituary notice in the papers, to be hurriedly read, laid aside, and as soon forgotten. He was surely capable of very much better things than he actually achieved; possibly the early death in Sheffield of his wife had a lasting influence on his character. We gladly welcome the opportunity of paying a small tribute to the memory of this capable, and even brilliant, artist, from whom we received much help and very many kindnesses, and who, in spite of his many and very obvious failings, was, in the truest sense of the word, a gentleman.

CHAPTER XXVII

NOW—AND AFTER

Above all, a nation cannot last as a money-making mob:—it cannot with impunity,—it cannot with existence,—go on despising literature, despising science, despising art, despising nature, despising compassion, and concentrating its soul on Pence. Do you think these are harsh or wild words? Have patience with me but a little longer. I will prove them to you, clause by clause.

"Sesame and Lilies."

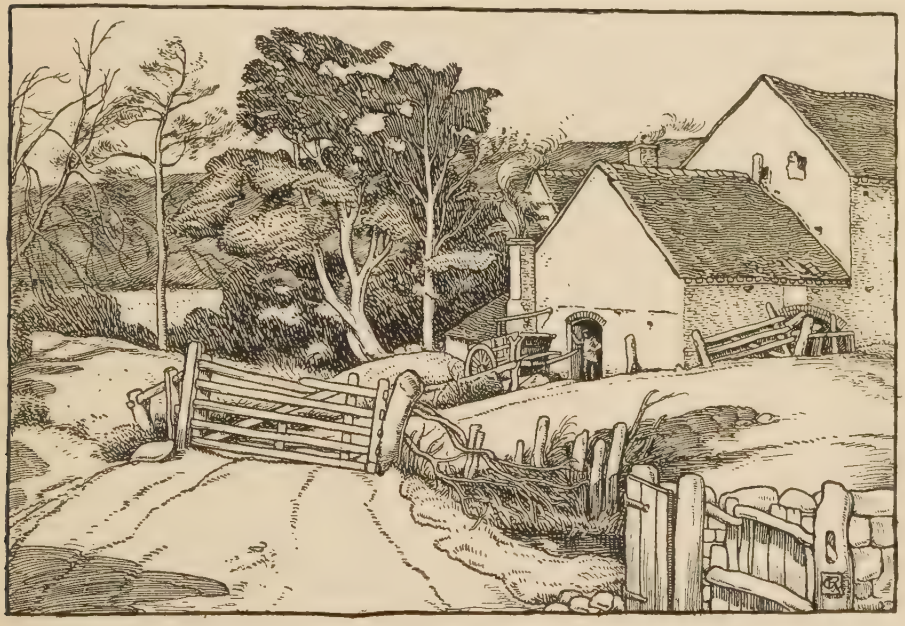
WHAT Ruskin wrote in 1871, in relation to that epoch, may be applied with equal if not acuter force to this. Indeed, some of his remarks (if extended quotation came within our province) are quite prophetic in their extreme modernity. "That is our real idea of 'Free Trade,'" he says; "'all the trade to myself.' You now find that by 'competition' other people can manage to sell something as well as you—and now we call for Protection again. Wretches!" It would be foolish to estimate the present standing and future prospects of the potting industry from the published statements of modern Protectionists; as, if we did, we must admit it to be in a very bad way, merely as an industry. Neither Protectionist nor Free Trader claim that English ceramics are artistic. And the spokesmen and writers of one of these sections claim that some of our rivals' productions, notably the Germans, *are* artistic. The claim has no solid foundation in fact. The exact artistic level of ordinary English (and especially Staffordshire) crockery may be easily determined by the "man in the street," if he

will take the trouble to compare the average crockery shop with the average draper's, silversmith's, paper-hanger's, bookseller's, or even ironmonger's.

As a mere trade the artistic level of the potting "trade" in England cannot be placed high, even by "patriotic" enthusiasts; and the average manufacturer will tell you frankly that unless his cost of production is kept rigidly within well-defined limits, he can find no sale for his goods, no matter how artistic they may be. We know that this is not the case, but he is right from his point of view, which hinges on the question as to what *he* considers to be artistic; and as he is the final adjudicator on the production of his designs, there seems to be no way out of the difficulty. We have, then, to consider the "trade" as a trade, rather than as an art, and its continued success in the markets of the world will depend mainly on the technical equipment of the modern potter in comparison with his foreign rivals. It behoves us to inquire into our technical system of instruction, and to compare it with that of other nations who are said to be overtaking us, if not outstripping us, in the race. It matters little, let us premise, how the foreign schools are taught and administered. An educational system suitable, say, to the German temperament, might not be successful here, and *vice versa*. A Royal Commission which visits and reports on the working of a number of Continental schools, might conceivably do harm rather than good by recommending the adoption of a Continental system of instruction, however well it might work on a Continental pottery.

Our salvation does not lie in Royal Commissions. We are, at present, frankly laying ourselves out for production of goods "in bulk"—made largely by machinery, and decorated mainly

by mechanical means. How do we, then, compare in mechanical equipment with our foreign competitors? and how far does our system of technical training assist us in devising new appliances, and improving our knowledge of the most efficient and economical ways of working existing ones? The question of waste and leakage in administration, and economy of production, is more important than any other in regard to



OLD FLINT MILL, BOTTESLOW

international competition. What is the most important item in the manufacture of pottery? Fuel. How many English potters fire their ovens and kilns with gas? In France and Germany, in Holland and Italy, and even in Spain and Denmark, it is the exception to use coal. And when gas is used, there is no waste during the ordinary wasteful periods (in England) of kindling and getting up heat, and in cooling;

for the ovens and kilns are so arranged that the oven is partially heated by the waste gas of the preceding one. The difference in cost is so amazing that any statement here would certainly be received with the most unbounded scepticism by any one unacquainted with the facts. The muffle kiln (fired, too, by gas) is almost unknown in the English potteries. Its advantages are too many to enumerate, and its cost is trifling.

In America the technical schools use the portable Caulkin's kiln or oven, which will fire either biscuit or glost ware, and can be regulated with almost clockwork precision. Such a kiln would be invaluable in our technical schools, if a sufficient staff of the right kind of instructors were in evidence, or even if the students were left to their own devices to learn from experiment. But in France, Germany, and America the professors are taken from the various potteries and given an added training in chemistry and physics. The thrower, for example, is not compelled, before he can qualify himself for the post, to fill up preposterous examination papers, and to understand "at least one foreign language." He is not even required to understand his own; he is merely required to "throw." At the St. Louis Exhibition more than thirty ceramic schools and institutions, independent of any pottery, exhibited selections which comprised matt and crystalline glazes, "grand feu" stonewares, flambé coppers and lustres, and many of the modern problems in ceramics. These wares were made under the instruction of professors whose qualifications were the previous production of successful pottery.

We have in England to face the important fact of the levelling influence of machinery, and the fact that, with its aid, the productions of one country are as good as those of another.

The work of the craftsman counts according to his skill; but the same machine in two different countries makes precisely similar ware if the same materials are used. And here, for the present, the Staffordshire manufacturer has some advantage, since certain materials are more accessible to him. But his competitors are gradually overcoming this difficulty, and it is not too much to say that if the British potter confines his ambition solely to the mechanically produced class of wares he is now making, his rivals will in a few years be abreast of him in the few points in which he retains superiority. It will then be a question of decoration. And on this point it is more than questionable whether the British potter will be able to hold his own—at any rate, if the present system continues. Very many manufacturers appraise the artistic value of a design by its cost in shillings, and others by its resemblance to some other manufacturer's design which happens to have "sold well." Too many potters are in the habit of (as Mr. J. C. Robinson puts it) "felicitously taking" their designs from any available sources rather than giving a designer a commission. We do not mean to say that manufacturers of this kind are typical examples of their class. We are glad to think they are not. Still, there are far too many of such manufacturers, and even the presence of a few is a positive danger to the whole community, and especially to their more honest brethren. We have known numbers of cases, of designs being copied outright from various sources, and in several instances, where the designer or owner of the design has protested, the reply has been a curt inquiry as to the number of his registration.

Of course, it may be said that the owner ought to protect his design; but it is not always convenient or expedient to do

this, and it augurs ill for the artistic success of a community where the moral sense of some manufacturers is so low as to permit them callously to assert their right (without the slightest apology or explanation) to these stolen goods, because the victim has no remedy against the thief; and it speaks ill for the business capacity of these people, inasmuch as they are content to steal a second-hand pattern rather than pay a small sum for a new one. We are glad to have the opportunity of recording our knowledge of many manufacturers of pottery whose integrity in this, as in all other matters, is beyond question; moreover, their very honesty makes them victims, because their taste and enterprise provide material for the pirates to steal or imitate. Another reason why art in pottery is at present at a low ebb, is that the British crockery retailer is generally possessed of far less taste than the average draper, stationer, or cabinet maker: hence we see the best pottery in shops that are not crockery shops. The crockery dealer attributes this to anything rather than his own ignorance and bad taste, but he persists in buying pottery of the more vulgar and "showy" sort. There are notable exceptions, of course, but they are few and far between. The crockery dealer generally is utterly oblivious to the signs of the times, the taste of his own customers, and the general trend of modern decoration. He cannot see that the modern feeling, universally diffused, is in the direction of simplicity in dress and decoration.

He is incapable of realising that a lady who buys simple dress fabrics, and eschews carved and gilded furniture, does not want her crockery covered with gold and colour, or even elaborate monochromic patterns; and when a manufacturer *does* produce a simple and well-considered pattern, it is either fore-doomed to failure from general rejection by the crockery shops, which of

Group of Flambé Ware. Bernard Moore

course constitute his principal market, or he is compelled to create a demand by ignoring the retail dealer and putting it before the public by other than his means.

Many intelligent and well-informed manufacturers, who would be perfectly willing to launch out, have had their ardour damped by the difficulty of getting the real buying public to see their goods. They must sell through the middleman; and as their ambition is generally to sell goods and make money, they naturally continue to make the goods demanded by the middleman.

There is also another phase of the question, which, although only a phase, has a serious bearing—the "concentration of the soul on Pence," as Ruskin puts it. This, again, if not universal—and it is to be feared that it is pretty general—is a danger of the greatest magnitude. If the concentration was on pounds it would be bad enough, as fixing the general aspiration on the mercenary side of the business rather than the creation of true and skilled work for the sake of truth and skill. "But I don't work for truth and skill," says the potter, "I work for wages." Yes, my friend, and your wages are in due proportion (or rather less in the descending ratio) to your lack of truth and skill. You do not, cannot, or will not see that wages have been, are, and eternally will be, paid you according to your honesty, and not your lack of it.

The Staffordshire potter too often forgets that low-priced things are not always cheap, and in his hysteric desire to save pence (which he usually accomplishes) he very often loses pounds. He is afraid of "combination," because he fears there will be traitors in the camp, and that the combination will result principally in benefit to the traitors. He works, therefore, on an individualist basis of the worst kind, constantly

cheapening, and constantly undercutting. He is afraid of spending money on essentials, and is astonished when he is confronted by superior goods made by those who are not afraid of speculation. He pays more for his ordinary decoration than the foreigner, and is consequently at a disadvantage, yet he will not pay a fifth of the price that foreigners frequently pay to Staffordshire designers for designs, and complains when these designs are put in competition against him.

He looks on the foreigner, and especially the German, as a most immoral person who chiefly subsists on the piracy of Staffordshire designs, but he is not above buying Austrian vases, and copying them at a cheaper rate. The real fact is, that the Staffordshire goods copied by the Germans are of a minor kind, and generally not worth copying, and the copies do not seriously affect the sale of the originals, as the Germans usually come in "the scramble" with a host of Staffordshire copyists—Goss's wares are a case in point.

But the question that concerns us most nearly is not whether English makers of pottery will continue to make money (they affirm that at present they are not doing so), but whether a few potters will arise out of the hurly-burly and make wares which will at least keep alive the old tradition. The signs are few, and the fulsomeness with which Simeon Shaw recounts that such and such a potter made a considerable fortune in front of his record of good work honourably accomplished, is a sign of the temper of the Staffordshire mind. The interest centres, not on what the man *did*, but what he *got* for doing it. He is mainly honoured for what he amassed, be the source never so base, and is considered a fool if his work, however righteous and worthy, cannot be coined in hard cash. In the Potteries to-day is one potter who has done something to redeem

Staffordshire from the charge of indifference and decadence—Bernard Moore—a potter in the truest sense of the word. He is master of all the resources of the potter's craft, and his work alone shows Staffordshire still capable of coping with the potters of France. It is technically triumphant, and it is quite delightful (though in a sense disappointing) to find in his show-room a case of pottery—perfect in colour and artistic feeling—which he will not sell, but prefers to retain for mere pride in its accomplishment.

Although Mr. Moore, in some of his pieces, has introduced decoration which somewhat detracts from their inherent beauty (in obedience to certain phases of popular taste), there is nothing banal, and nothing out of place. But his finer pieces—mostly made for museums and public collections—are fit to rank with those of the Orientals.

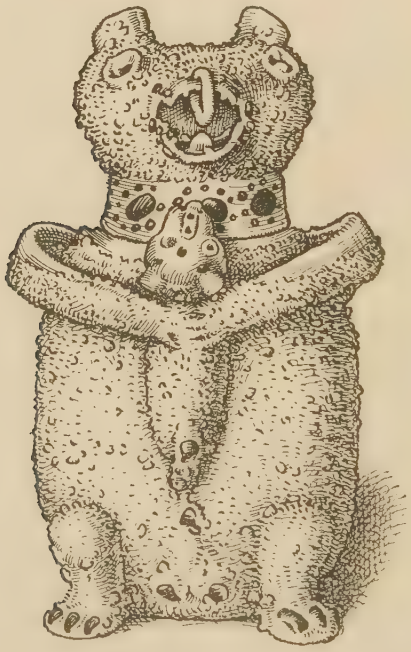
In potters like Mr. Moore there is hope.

Messrs. Doulton have also produced good flambés, and the general trend of their productions is to make commercial goods as artistic as the conditions will allow; and some of their wares, occasionally, are artistic quite independently of commercial conditions. Messrs. Macintyre have (under the direction of Mr. Moorcroft) produced some examples of true ceramic work; and the Foley potteries have made some intermittent attempts to improve the prevailing style of decoration.

There is good material in Staffordshire, and there are good minds. Let us hope they will combine to a worthy result. We cannot do better than conclude with the words of Ruskin:

"Happily, our disease is, as yet, little worse than this incapacity of thought; it is not corruption of the inner nature; we ring true steel, when anything strikes home to us; and

though the idea that everything should 'pay' has infected our every purpose so deeply, that even when we would play the Good Samaritan, we never take our twopence and give them to the host without saying, 'When I come again, thou shalt give me fourpence,' there is a capacity of noble compassion left in our heart's core."



JUG, FORMED OF A BEAR GRASPING A DOG: SALT-GLAZED WHITE WARE

Schreiber collection, South Kensington Museum

INDEX

Abington, L. J., partner with E. J. Ridgway, 293

Abraham, R. F., art director at Copeland's, 298

Abraham, R. J., work for Copeland's, 307

Adam, brothers (architects), influence on the artistic taste of their period, 224; absurdity of repeating in twentieth century the characteristics of a style which is dead, 254

Adams, John, earliest known potter of prolific family of potters, builder of the Brick House Works, 233

Adams, William (of Greengates), Wedgwood's favourite pupil, 233; last vase made under Wedgwood, 234; work at Greengates, 235; variety of productions in jasper, stoneware, and blue printed ware, 236–8; comparisons between his jasper and that of Wedgwood, 237; introduction into the Potteries of method of printing from copper plates, 235; designs by, 238

Adams, William (of Cobridge and the Brick House), introduction of "bat printing," description of process, 239

Adams, William (of Stoke-on-Trent), blue printed ware, 241

Adams, William (of Greenfields), "sponging" process, 241

Adams, Richard (cousin to Adams of the Brick House), productions, 241, 242

Adams family, works in Stoke, 242

Agate wares, description of method, 193, 194; examples in various collections, 194; figures, 257

Ainsley, John, introduction of lustre at Lane End, 272

Alcock & Keeling, Nile Street Works, successors of John and Richard Riley, 297

Alcock, Samuel, building of Hill Pottery, 297; productions, 297; specialities, 298

Alcock & Diggory, china section of Hill Pottery, 298

Alcock, S., figure painter at Copelands, 307

Allen, Thomas (figure painter and designer), early training at Marlborough House; decorative work for South Kensington Museum, 310

Alma-Tadema, Sir Lawrence, O.M., R.A., picture of "Hadrian," 27–29

Alnoit, Howze de, association with the brothers Leigh at Douai, 333

Andries, Gaspar, 79

Angelini, modeller for Wedgwood, 316

Anglo-Saxon Potter, the, 34–49

Aretine ware, 14

Arnold, Matthew, quotation from "Essays in Criticism," 112

Arnoux, Léon, comparison of English painters and gilders with the Orientals, 181; calcined bones, 280; association with the Minton firm—art director, 287; improvements in China body, reproductions of Sèvres colours, 301; enamels for majolica, 303; discussion with Charles Toft as to the propping of a vase, 304; son of the Widow Arnoux of Apt, near Avignon, successful production of hard porcelain, opinions as to English bone china, career indelibly

connected with that of Minton's, 319, 320; retirement, 324
Arnoux, Widow, manufactures at Apt, 333
Ashworth, Taylor, successor to Mason Ironstone Co., 296
Astbury, John, his behaviour at Bradwell, 145, 146; figures, 258
Astbury, Thomas, dispute with Ralph Shaw about a patent, 332
Avoine, Maxime, sculptor, 329

Bagnall, Charles, Cookworthy's patent, 279
Bagshawe Collection, Adams slab, 238
Bailey & Balkin (of Longton), lustre, 275
Bailey, J. C., manager of Doulton's (Burslem), 313
Barker, Sutton & Till, Staffordshire, figures, 257
Barlow, Hannah, work for Minton's Studio and Doulton's, 355
Barnfield, Richard, Shakespeare's indebtedness to, 84, 85
Bartlem, emigration to South Carolina, 227, 228, 336
Bateman, John, D.L., Biddulph Grange, 345, 346
Bateman, Robert, painter, 346
Beech & Hancock, Tunstall lustres, 276
Bellarmines, 80
Belleek ware, 337
Bemrose, W., 136
Bennet, agate and marbled wares at Apt, 333
Bentley, Thomas, Liverpool merchant, partner with Wedgwood, 205; letters of Wedgwood to, 206, 207, 212, 217, 219; letter of, "discovery" of Flaxman, 217
Besche, Lucien, work for Minton's & Copeland's, 307, 321, 327; migration to London, productions, death, 327
"Biddle" Moor, 338–46
Biddulphe, William le, 338
Biddulphe, Francis, builder of Biddulphe Old Hall, 338
Biddulph, Colonel (of the East India Company), native Indian servants, 341
Bernard, 329
Birch, cream jug, 251
Bird's-eye View, a 1–9
Bishop & Stonier, 299, 313
Bodley & Diggory, Hill Pottery, china portion, 298
Bodley, E. F., Hill Pottery, china portion, 298
Bodley & Son, Hill Pottery, china portion, 298
Bodley, E. J. D., Hill Pottery, china portion, 298; last successor to china department of Hill Pottery productions, 310
Bone, Henry, work for New Hall Pottery, 281
Booth, John, claim to invention of lustre for earthenware, 272
Böttcher, teapot, 143
Boullemier, Antonin, arrival in the Potteries, 321; characteristics, birth, and studies at Sèvres, Shakespeare Vase for Brown-Westhead, musician, actor, death, 326, 327
Boyle, John, partner with Minton, 286
Bradwell Pottery, 140; clay, 140; wood, 152; House, 158
Brereton, Sir William, siege of Nantwich, 339, 340
Brewer, Hart, Belleek ware, 337
Brislington, lustres, 271
British Museum, examples in, Cockpit Hill plates, 131; puzzle jug, 134; tyg, 136
Bromley, William, Belleek factory, invitation to America, 337
Brongniart, Alexandre, calcined bones, 280; collection of ceramics at Sèvres, 300
Brookes, William, engravings by, 240
Brownfield parian statuary, 268; Gladstone testimonial vase, 309; productions, 309
Brownfield, William, commencing potting

at Cobridge Works, 296; partnership with his son, 297; death, 308
Brownfield, W. E., connection with the Cobridge Factory, withdrawal from the firm, 308, 309
Brownfield, Arthur, solving of ceramic problems, 308; establishment of Brownfield Guild Pottery, 309
Brownhills, Tunstall, 299
Brown-Westhead, T. C., 293
Brown-Westhead, Moore & Co., productions of, at Cauldon Place, 308
Brunt, Henry (of Penkhull), 337
Built wares, method of making, 10; system taught in Ceramic Schools of United States, 12
Bull-running, 72
Burgess & Leigh, earthenware portion of Hill Pottery, 298
Burns, Right Hon. John, reference to excursion party from the Potteries to London, 59
Burton, William, appreciation of Whieldon, 187
Butter-pot days, 83–95
Byerley, Thomas, nephew to and partner with Wedgwood, 221

Caddie, A., article on cauliflower ware in the "Burlington," 196
Campbell, Colin Minton, connection with the Minton firm, 286, 301; social influence, loans from Royal and other collections, 303; panels of hexagonal tesseræ for mural decoration, 310
Carr, James, of Shelton, potting in America, 337
Carrier-Belleuse, parian vase, 268; work for Minton's and Brownfield's, facility of execution, modelling master at Stoke, 317
Cassilis, Joseph, "Biddle" Moor, 345
Champion, Richard, petition to Parliament for extension of Cookworthy's patent, 279; closing of Bristol factory, 280
Charles II., Boscobel Oak, representations of in pottery, 90
Chesterton, site of Roman camp and junction of two great Roman roads, 34; dismantling of stronghold at, 53
Chesterton, G. K., remarks on nomenclature, 42
Chomley, Lady, Collection, 240
Christall, Joshua, apprenticeship to John Davenport, probable painter of the New Hall service, 281, 282
Church, Professor A. H., Roman occupation of Britain, 24; Mercia an Anglian settlement, 36; Tickenhall dishes, 131; Elers and salt-glazing, 149; estimate of Wedgwood's work, 232; Adams jasper, 237; Wedgwood and lustred wares, 271; Voyez and piracy, 316
Church festivals, ale drinking, 69
Cistercian abbeys, pottery made at, 65
Cistercians of Yorkshire, 65, 75
Clarke, William, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, subsidy in France for imitation of English clays, previous experiments at Lille, establishment with Ralph Shaw at Montereau, branch establishment at Criel, 332, 333
Clews, James, blue printed ware, 296
Clowes, William, Cookworthy's patent, 279
Cockpit Hill, 110
Coleman, William Stephen, experiments in pottery decoration, application to Copeland's, overtures to Minton's, and installation at the works at Stoke, 347; method of early work, 348; examples, colour perception, 349; naturalist and book illustrator, gradual abandonment of under-glaze, 350; productions, 352; competition for decoration of Criterion Restaurant, 353; secession from Minton's Studio, 356; influence on the Studio, 360; death, 362
Combed wares, description of process, 104
Comolera, Paul, sculptor, 321; eccentricities, loan of a stag from Trentham,

quarrel with Boullemier, return to Paris, death, 327–9
Cookworthy, William, blue pottery found at Bradwell, 148 ; patent for making true porcelain, 279
Copeland, William, association and partnership with Spode, death, 283, 284
Copeland, William Taylor, member of Parliament for Coleraine and Stoke, Alderman and Lord Mayor of London, 284
Copeland & Garrett, lustres, 275
Copeland, Messrs. W. T., & Sons, parian figures, 267 ; continuation of business from 1867 to present time under style of, 284 ; tiles for Imperial Library at Paris, 306 ; decorative tile work, china, 307
Cork & Edge, lustre figures, 276
Cormine, James, Nile Street Works, 298
Costrels, 77, 80
Crematory urns, 13, 15, 16
Crouch wares, 149, 182–4

Dale J., Staffordshire figures, 257
Dale & Page, 314
Dalmazzoni, modeller for Wedgwood, 316
Daniel, James, discovery of method of preparing gold lustre, 273
Daniel, John, New Hall Pottery, 281
Daniel, Henry, Spode's enameller, son of New Hall Daniel, 282
Daniel, Messrs. R. & H., 314
Davenport, John, Joshua Christall, 281 ; study of French methods of making porcelain, 282 ; works at Longport, decorations, glass-making, arrangement with Fuseli to design stained glass windows, equipment of volunteer corps, glass hats, death, 289, 290
Delft, Staffordshire, 112
Dickens, Charles, description of parian figures at Copeland's works, 267, 268
Donaldson, A. B., productions in pottery, 361
Dimmock's, Hanley, 299
Dimsdale Hall, situation of, 151 ; description of, 154–7
Doulton & Co. of Burslem, rapid increase of business, productions, 313
Dresser, Dr. Christopher, designs for Minton's Studio, 360
Dreyfus, ceramic artist of Paris, 326
Drinking-horns, 46
Druids, their influence on the potter, 17
Duesbury, William, connection with Littler and Longton Hall, 175 ; Derby Works, 176
Dugdale, association with Lords Aston and Stafford, 93
Duke, Sir James, purchase of Hill Pottery, 298
Dwight of Fulham, 140, 142 ; salt-glazed stoneware, 149 ; first patent, 166 ; bust of Prince Rupert, 167 ; secretive disposition, 167 ; arrangement of his will, 225
Dyson, Rev. J. B., Wesleyan Methodism, 343

Edge & Grocott, Staffordshire figures, 257
Edge & Malkin, wares, 299
Elden, Matthew, appointment at Minton's Studio, 356 ; partiality for experiments, hustler, individuality, 357 ; mental malady and death, 358 ; failures, 359
Elers, John Philip, godson of Elector of Mentz, 139 ; residence at Dimsdale, 141 ; marriage in 1699, 142 ; excellent mathematician, 156 ; supposed connection with glass manufactory at Chelsea, 159 ; ceramic art unremunerative, 225
Elers, David, warehouse in the Poultry, 139, 151 ; merchant in London, 160
Elers, brothers, their origin, 139 ; arrival in England, 139 ; employment of imbeciles, 145 ; ware, 158 ; process, 158, 159 ; date of quitting Staffordshire and subsequent movements, 159 ; improvements introduced by, 163

INDEX

Elers, Paul, 151 ; family of, 160 ; correspondence with Wedgwood, 161–5

Encaustic tiles, William the Conqueror's palace at Caen decorated with, 51 ; ill-considered application of the term to inlaid tiles, 64 ; process of making, 66

Erdswicke, Hugh de, 70

Eyre, George, contributions to development of encaustic-tile process, pavements of Stoke Railway Station and elsewhere, 288

Eyre, John, R.B.A., work for the Lambeth Doulton firm, 312 ; association with Minton's Studio, 353, 354 ; secession from the Studio, 358

Falkner, Frank, collection of, at Peel Park, 171 ; Turner coffee-pot, 245 ; Staffordshire figures, exhibition of, at Salford, 257, 259 ; reference to group of Hudibras on horseback, 261

Flaxman, John, work for Wedgwood, 207 ; individuality, 208 ; set of chessmen, 209 ; commencement of relations with Wedgwood, 217 ; his first bill for modelling, 218 ; parallel between past and present periods, 218–20 ; visit of to the Potteries, 220 ; later and better prices for work, 221 ; large number of "copies" made, in proportion to original work, 253

Ford, J. W., 128

Foreign Contingent, the, 315–29

Felspar, in "opacous" glazes, 280

Fragonard, Th., of Sèvres, grandson of the celebrated painter of that name, 326

Frye, T., patent for calcined bones, 277

Fuddling cups, 97

Fulham potteries, imitations of Flemish stonewares, 79

Furnival's, Cobridge, 299, 313

Gardner, John, silver lustre, 272

Garrett, Thomas, partnership with Copeland, 284

Giorgio, Maestro, Italian lustre, 270, 271

Gladstone, Right Hon. W. E., extract from speech on occasion of laying the foundation-stone of Wedgwood Institute, 223 ; Gladstone testimonial vase, 309

Glaisher, Dr. J. W. L., Collection, 123, 125, 126, 181, 199, 256, 257, 262–4

Glass, Joseph, 123

Goldermann, 329

Graffito, method of, 133 ; examples of, 134, 135

Green glaze, first came into use, 56 ; application of to buff or red terra-cotta, 61 ; ewer found at Lewes, 62 ; falling for a time into disuse, 81

Grindley, Messrs., 313

Haak, Arend de, Delft potter, 332

Hall, pottery at Gien, methods and productions, 334

Hammond, Edward, work at Minton's Studio, 357, 358

Hancock, John, of Etruria, bronze lustre, 271, 272, 274

Hancock, Robert, of Worcester, 239

Hanley Museum, statuette of J. J. Rousseau, 265

Harland Collection, Adams jug, 238

Harrison, Major-General, 89 ; hanging referred to by Pepys, 90

Hassells, Anthony, of Shelton, association with Joseph Ring of Bristol, 335, 337

Heath, Job, 128

Henk, John, modeller to Minton's, 324

Henk, senr., employment at Minton's, productions, death, 324

Hennys, Burslem artist, gold lustre, 272

Heywood, Thomas, 83

Hicks, Meigh, & Johnson, jug for Corporation of Newcastle, 295

Hilditch & Hopwood, 314

Hill Pottery, Burslem, origin, productions, 297

Hobson, R. L., of British Museum, on Champion's Bristol factories and true porcelain, 280, 281
Hodgkin, J. E., F.S.A., collection, 117, 123
Hodgson, Mrs. Willoughby, observations upon Longton Hall, 178, 179
Hollins, Samuel, partner with Warburton, 252 ; Cookworthy's patent, 279
Hollins. Michael Daintry, partnership with Minton's, 286 ; secession from the firm, agreement to confine himself to manufacture of tiles ; works at Cliff Bank, failing health, skill as a ceramic chemist, death, 305, 306
Horobin, of Tunstall, silver lustre, 272
Howell & James, exhibition of amateur work, 361
Hughues-Protat, connection with Minton's, character of productions, modelling master at Stoke, 317
Hulme Collection, Burslem Museum, 236
Hulton Abbey, fragments discovered at, 57, 105, 106
Hürten, Charles Ferdinand, floral work for Copeland's, 307 ; following, 322 ; birth at Cologne, migration to Paris, work at Paris International Exhibition of 1858, Nature studies, productions, personality, 323, 324

Iron-smelting, 76
Irving, H. B., "Life of Judge Jeffreys," 92

Jaggard, publisher, 83
Jahn, Louis H., art director at Brownfields, 308, 324 ; engagement by, and art director at Minton's, retirement from practice of art, curatorship of Hanley Museum, collector, 324 ; Ridgway inkstands, 266
Jahn Collection, 143
Janson, Guy, 79
Jansz, Thomes, work at Delft, 331
Jeannest, Emile, models for parian, 317
Jewitt, Llewellyn, VII., pot-works at Crich, 183 ; Adams's works at Stoke, 242 ; acquisition of Whieldon documents, 282 ; inaccuracy as to proper names, 296 ; statement as to Cobridge Works, 297
Johnson, James, 128
Johnson T., 128
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, experiments in potting at the Chelsea factory, weakness for teapots, 278
Johnson, brothers, 313
Jones, G., & Sons, 313
Joubert, 329

Keeling & Co., mentioned in old directory as potting in Stoke Lane, Newcastle, 185
Keeling & Toft, of Hanley, covered jug, 252
Keeling, Anthony, Cookworthy's patent, 279, 280
"Kervyng, Boke of," 55

Lakin & Poole, Staffordshire figures, 256 ; group of assassination of Marat, 264
Leger, 329
Leigh Brothers, Charles and James, manufactory at Douai, productions, 333
Leigh, Molly, the Burslem witch, tradition of her burial, 95
Leroy, 321 ; speciality, art director at Crown Derby Works, 329
Lessore, Emile, work for Minton's, vases for Emperor of Russia, association with Wedgwood's, removal to Fontainebleau, artistic methods, death, 322
Littler, W., relationship to Aaron Wedgwood, 174 ; removal to Longton Hall, 174 ; introduction of fluid glaze, 175 ; application of oxide of cobalt, 175 ; connection with Duesbury, 175, 176 ; connection with the Wedgwoods, 284
Lockett, J., Staffordshire figures, 257 ; lustres, 275
Longton Hall, productions, 177–8

Lucas, Dan, landscape painter for Copeland's, 307
Lustred wares, 270–6

Macintyre, Messrs., productions, 371
Maddocks, 313
Magniac, Charles, collector, 349
Mallet, 329
Mansfield, Ralph, of Burslem, manager of Herculaneum Pottery, Liverpool, 335
Marks, H. Stacey, R.A., designs for Minton's, 304, 352, 353
Mason, Miles, of Lane End, potting in latter half of eighteenth century, 294
Mason, Charles James, of Lane Delph, patent for "ironstone china," 294; productions, 295
Mason, George Miles, father of George Mason, A.R.A., in partnership with his brother Charles James, 294; contesting borough of Stoke, 295
Mason, George, A.R.A., reference to paintings by, 294
Mayer Collection, Liverpool, 129
Mayer, Jos., 248
Mayer, Elijah, improbability of connection with Meir or Mayer family of Cockpit Hill Pottery in High Street, Hanley, 248; variety of his productions, stoneware of different colours, buff terra-cotta, basaltes, cream-coloured dinner-ware, trial plate, 249; teapot, 252
Mayer, Thomas, pottery at Cliff Bank, 250
Mayer, brothers, partnership with Liddle Elliot, 250, 299
Mayer & Newbold, lustres, 275
Maw & Co., lustres, 276
Mawson Collection, Adams jug, 237
Meakin, Messrs., 313
Mediæval Pottery, 61–72
Meigh, lustres, 275
Meigh, Job, potting in 1770, 296
Meigh, Charles, grandson of Job, Old Hall Earthenware Co., productions, dismantling of works, 296
Meir, John, 131
Meir, S., 131
Meli, Giovanni, modeller for Minton's, 318
Memorial tablets, slip, 129
Meteyard, Eliza, "Life of Wedgwood" VII.; speculations as to Wedgwood's apprenticeship, 202, 204; Wedgwood's letters to Bentley, 206, 207; access to Wedgwood documents, 234; negotiations for possession of Adams vase, 235; reference to Wedgwood figures, 264
Minton, Thomas, manufacturer of semi-transparent porcelain, 282; birth at Shrewsbury, apprenticed to Thomas Turner of Caughley, engraver of willow pattern, marriage, founding of present Minton Pottery, partnership with William Pounall, productions, engagement of John Turner as practical potter, family, death, 284–6
Minton, Herbert, experiments in china figures, 266; birth and education, association with Minton firm, partnership with John Boyle, and subsequently with M. D. Hollins and Colin Minton Campbell, acquisition of services of Léon Arnoux, engagement of Samuel Bourne as designer, purchase of patent for "encaustic" tiles and solidifying powdered clay, productions, 286–8
Minton & Co., parian figures, 267, 268; lustres, 275; successes, operations, predilection for copying, 300–2; majolica fountain, imitations of faïence d'Orion, 303; engagement of M. Arnoux, 301, 319; Solon's connection with, 304; separation of Messrs. Colin Minton Campbell and Michael Hollins, 305; encaustic tiles, 306; production of "parian," 317
Minton's Art Pottery Studio, 347–362
Monglott, Joseph, work for William Adams (of Greengates), 238
Moore, William, partner of T. C. Brown-Westhead, 293

Moore, Bernard, productions, 371
Moorecroft, T., connection with E. J. Bodley, 310 ; with Messrs. Macintyre, 371
Morgan, William de, lustres, 276 ; occasional visits to Minton's Studio, 361
Morley, Francis, purchase of patents, etc., from Mason, and potting operations at Hanley, 295 ; success with Mason "ironstone" and subsequent retirement from business, 296
Morris, Rowland, panels for Wedgwood Institute, 223, 318, 356
Mountford, John, association with Spode in statuary porcelain, 316
Müller, 329
Murrhine vases, 30
Mussill, 321 ; engagement by Minton's, nationality, studies in Paris, floral studies, work on red body, swiftness of execution, high prices of productions, death under distressing circumstances, 324, 325 ; fondness for orchids, 346
Muswell Hill, destruction of pottery at, 194

Neale, J., tea set in Burslem Museum, 245 ; partnership with Palmer, productions, 250 ; partnership with Wilson, 251 ; Staffordshire figures, 256, 259 ; connections by marriage, 284
Neale & Co., ideal figures, 259, 261
Newcastle-under-Lyme, 53, 56, 58 ; priory, inventory of goods at, 74
New Hall Works, porcelain, 280 ; productions, 281, 282
Nile Street Pottery, J. & R. Riley, James Cormine, Thomas Pinder, Shadford Pinder, Doulton & Co., 298, 299
Norman Potter, the, 50–60
Norwich Museum, Graffito jug, 134
Now—and after, 363–72

Oswald, St., death of, 44
Owen, Hugh, Champion's biographer, 279 ; Bone's biographer 281
Owl jugs, 129

Palm, 329
Palmer of Bagnall, story of accidental discovery of salt-glazing, 148, 150
Palmer, Humphrey, pirating of Wedgwood's productions, partnership with Neale, examples of their wares, 250 ; bone in earthenware, 278
Parian, doubts as to its authorship, 267 ; Minton's productions in, 268
Passing of the Elerses, the, 151, 165
Peel Park, Salford, catalogue of Staffordshire figures, 269
Pennington, of Liverpool, use of bone ash, 277
Pepys, Samuel, remarks upon feasting, 92
Piccardt, factory of "Porcelain Bottle" at Delft, 331
Pickman, 336
Pilsbury, flower painter, 346
Pinder, Thomas, Nile Street Works, 298
Pinder, Shadford, Nile Street Works, partnership with Doulton & Co., 298
Pipe-makers, incorporation of craft of, 96
Plot, Dr., VI., manufacture of butter-pots, 86 ; slip process, 87 ; mode of reckoning ware, 88 ; manufacture at Newcastle of tiles for garden edging, 185
Posset-pots, 98
Potter, Charles, manufacture du Prince de Galles, Paris, productions, 334
Potteries, unrecorded, at Newcastle and elsewhere, 184, 185
Pounall, William, partnership with Minton's, 285
Poynter, Sir E. J., designs for Minton's, 304, 351
Pratt, Fenton, 299
Pre-Roman Potter, the, 10–19
Prosser, Mr., patent for solidifying powdered clay, 288
Puzzle jugs, 97

Queen's ware, 213
Quills, used in slip decoration, 104 ; vessel for making use of them, 105

Racetti, modeller for Wedgwood, 316
Rataud, 329
Reuter, Edmond G., association with Minton's Studio and subsequent employment at Stoke, return to Geneva, frieze of monkeys, 354, 355, 360–1
Rhead, G. W., senr., discovery of Elers pipes, 152–3; tea service, New Hall, 281
Rhead, G. Woolliscroft, apprentice at Stoke, 348; work at Minton's Studio, 352
Rhead, Frederick, art director of the Brownfield Guild Pottery, Gladstone testimonial vase, 309
Rhodes, pioneer of potting in Australia, 336
Rich, W., 128
Ridgway, Job, birth and apprenticeship, migration to Leeds, return to Hanley, association with Methodist movement, marriage, establishment of Cauldon Place Works, productions, death, 290, 291; interests of himself and son oustide the Potteries, 292
Ridgway, William, son of Job Ridgway, 291; renting of Church Street Works, Hanley, proprietor of six potteries, death, 293
Ridgway, Edward John, son of William, partnership with his father, and afterwards with L. J. Abington, partnership with his brother, afterwards with T. C. Brown-Westhead and others, productions, 293
Ridgway, John, inkstands, 266; bone china, 282; partnership in pottery at Poole, Dorset, blue printed wares and other productions, potter to Her Majesty, employment of skilful painters, death, 292, 293
Rigg, pipe-maker, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 96
Riley, J. & R., Nile Street Works, 298
Ring, Joseph, of Bristol, 335
Robinson & Wood, potting at Cobridge works, 296
Robinson, John, connection with Sadler & Green, 297
Robinson, J. C., F.S.A., description of a Copeland bottle, 302
Robinson & Leadbeater, parian statuary, 318
Rochfort, J. D., work in pottery, 361
Roman invasion of Britain, 20–4
Roman Potter in Staffordshire, the, 20–33
Rush murders, figure groups, 266
Ruskin, quotations from, 120, 363, 371, 372; comparison of examples of the ideal—of the work of Thomas Bewick with that of the Italian artists, 260

Sadler, John, master printer of Liverpool, introduction of process of transfer printing, in conjunction with Mr. Guy Green, 213
Sadler & Green, 213
Sagger walls, 115
Sala, George Augustus, remarks upon amateurs' work, 361
Salopian ware, 27
Salt, Ralph, lustred figures, 276
Salt-glazing, theory of introduction of, in Staffordshire, 146–50
Salt-glaze, 166–86
Salting, Mrs. W. S., collection at Bethnal Green, 169, 258
Sandeman, 336
Sanderson, imitations in Holland of Turner vases, 332
Saxon names, 58, language, 59
Scharff, 329
Schreiber Collection, posset-pot, 173; agate cats, 257;
Shaw, Dr. Simeon, "Chemistry of Pottery," and "History of Staffordshire Potteries," VII. potteries at Red Street, 87; Elers pottery at Nuremburg, 140; tradition as to a second Elers pottery at Dimsdale, 141; Elers *fabrique*, 144; salt-glazing, 147, 148; secrecy and jealousy of Elers, Littler and the manufacture

of porcelain, 174, 175; vapour from salt-glaze ovens, 181; Spode and printed ware, 239; Turner's white stoneware at Stoke, 243; machine erected by Turner for turning his lathes, 244; reference to Turner's death, 245; application of gold by Turner, 246; arrest in Paris and subsequent liberation of William Turner, 247; an Elijah Mayer potting at Red Street in eighteenth century, 248; John Hancock and the introduction of lustre, 271; description of lustres, 272, 273; gift of a teapot to Mayer, 297

Shaw, Ralph, defeat by Astbury in Law Courts, migration to France, subsidy for imitation of English clays, 332

Shaw, Robert, 126

Sidebotham, Dr., Staffordshire figures, 257

Simeon, Victor, modeller for Minton's, "Captive" vase, eccentric, 318, 319

Simpson, Ralph, 121, 122, 125

Simpson, John, 121

Simpson, W. B., & Sons, work for Criterion Restaurant, 353; tiles, 362

Slater, John, art director at Doulton's; Burslem, 313

Slip wares and "Shord-rucks," 96–108

Solon, Louis Marc, Toft dish found in a cottage in Hanley, 116; collection of slip wares, 117, 122, 128, 134, 135, speculation as to the brothers Elers, 140; Pcw Group, 170; collection, 171, 194; *pâte-sur-pâte*, 320; initial effort in published work, marriage, contributions to the literature of ceramics, 321

Sparkes, G. silver lustre, 272

Speight, figure painter, 293

Spode, Josiah (the 1st), apprenticed to firm of Whieldon & Wedgwood, 189; "expert violinist" 235; productions, 236; white stoneware made by Bankes & Turner, on premises of, at Stoke, 243; application of steam to lathes, 244; unscrupulous copyist, productions, 253; lustre, 272; Whieldon's memoranda, work for Whieldon, engagement of William Copeland, death, 283, 284

Spode, Josiah (the 2nd), credited with introduction of bone, 277

Spode, Josiah (the 3rd), association with William Taylor Copeland, death, 284; experiments in parian, 316

Stafford, Lord, execution of, 93

Staffordshire delft, 112

Staffordshire figures, 255–69

Staffordshire man abroad, 330–7

Steele, Daniel, maker of wares resembling jasper, 251

Stevens, Alfred, designs for Minton's, 304

Stevenson, A., potting in early part of nineteenth century, 297

Stevenson & Dale, potting at Cobridge in 1780, 297

Stringer, Mr., information concerning the founding of the Minton firm, 285

Stuart-Wortley, Colonel, photographic work for Minton's Studio, 358, 359

Sun-kilns, 77

Sutherland, Duke of, offer of Trentham Hall for purposes of higher education, 1

Taylor, George, 128

Taylor, T. Minton, tile manufactory at Fenton, 294

Taylor, William, dish in Liverpool Museum, 127

Thornbury Castle, Gloucestershire, panel of four tiles, 110

Tickenhall dishes, 109, 130, 131

Till of the Sytch, Burslem, lustres, 276

Tinkersclough, "Shord-rucks" at, 107

Toft, Thomas, Restoration figure, 91; method employed by, 109; wares, 112-18

Toft, Ralph, 115, 118

Tofts, the two, 109–19

INDEX

Toft school, 120–37

Toft, Charles, craftsman at Minton's, replicas of faïence d'Orion, graffito vases, discussion with Mr. Arnoux, etc., 303–4

Transition, 138–150

Tudor period, the, 73–82

Turner, John, of Green Dock, date of commencing potting, removal to Lane End, 243; machine for turning his lathes, productions in basaltes and jasper, 244; Continental business, 245; Cookworthy's patent, 279; delft, imitations of, 332

Turner, John, junr., 245; engagement as practical potter to the Minton firm, 286

Turner, William, son of John, of Green Dock, unfortunate experience of, in Paris, arrest as a spy, liberty obtained through good offices of British Ambassador, failure of his business, 247

Turner & Co., Staffordshire figures, 256; failure in 1803, 286

Turner, W., F.R.S., Crich wares, 182, 184

Twyford, 145

Tygs, various kinds of, 98

Upchurch ware, 26

Victorian Potteries, birth of, 277–99

Victorian Potters, the, 300–14

Walton, Toby jug, 256

Warburton, Jacob, 246; busts of Shakespeare and Mercury, partnership with Hollins, 252; Cookworthy's patent, 279

Warburton, Peter, of Lane End, patent for lustred wares, closing of works of, variety of productions, 275

Ward, John, "History of Stoke-on-Trent," 338

Wedgwood, Gilbert, 200

Wedgwood, John, puzzle jug by, 199

Wedgwood, Dr. Thomas, 200

Wedgwood, the brothers Thomas and John, 200–1

Wedgwood, Josiah, Appendix to his Catalogue (edition 1815), 99; salt-glazed block of Elers pattern, 143; letter to Bentley *re* Elers, 147; early career, 188, 189, 201; partnership with Harrison, 189; association and partnership with Whieldon, 188–90; indenture of one of his apprentices, 202; business at Ivy House and Brick House Works, partnership with Bentley, founding of village and works at Etruria, 205; various kinds of ware produced in jasper, 206, 209; the Portland Vase, story of, 209–11; black basaltes, 211; "Rosso Antico," white semi-porcelain, variegated wares, 212; Queen's ware, its history and qualities, Sadler and Green's process of transfer printing, 213; Wedgwood's lack of artistic power, artistic talent employed by, 215; criticisms of some of his productions, 216, 217; the Russian service, 216; Flaxman engaged, 217; his first bill for modelling, 218; the "Genius of Sculpture," 219; an imaginary parallel between past and present periods, 218–20; Flaxman's prices, Hackwood and his work, partnership with Byerley, 221; marks used by the firm, memorial Institute at Burslem, 222; criticism of Gladstone's speech on occasion of laying the foundation-stone, 223–5; Professor Middleton's different estimate of, 224; services to the art of potting, 225; many-faceted character, 226; address to workmen on the subject of entering the service of foreign manufacturers, 227–31; Staffordshire figures, 264; basaltes figures, 265; lustres, 271, 274; Cookworthy's patent, opposition to, 279

Wedgwood, Messrs. J. & Sons, manufacture

of china, 310, 312 ; exhibits at Vienna and Paris, 312 ; engagement of Lessore, 322
Wedgwood, Godfrey, connection with the firm, 312
Wedgwood's rivals, imitators and followers, I., 232–42
Wedgwood's rivals, imitators and followers, II., 243–54
What Wedgwood did, 199–231
Wesley, John, bust of, 265 ; Wesleyan Methodism in the Potteries, 265, 291, 343
Whieldon, Thomas, works at Fenton Low, 188 ; association and partnership with Wedgwood, 188, 192 ; apprenticeship of Josiah Spode, 189 ; employment of Aaron Wood as modeller, 189 ; business in snuff-boxes, 190 ; his productions classified, 193 ; absence of marks on his wares, 193 ; agate wares, 194 ; mottled wares, 195 ; inferior pieces, 196 ; cauliflower and pineapple wares, 196 ; his improvements of the potter's art, 197 ; his commercial success and public services, 197, 198 ; Staffordshire figures, 256, 258
Whitfield, George, lustred bust of, 265, 275
Wileman, J. F., lustred ware, 275
Willett Collection, 62, 69, 93, 116, 124, 125, 134, 194
Willett, Messrs., association with William Bromley in Belleek wares, 337
Wilson, R., partner with Neale, 251 ; Staffordshire figures, 256 ; lustres, 273 ; connections by marriage, 284
Wimborne, Right Hon. Lord, Collection, 135
Wood, Ralph, manufacture of cloudy and mottled wares, 195 ; work of, 255, 259 ; ideal and symbolic figures, examples of mistaken industry, 259, 260 ; works at Burslem about 1850, 260
Wood, Aaron, Staffordshire figures, 256
Wood, Enoch, bust of Wesley, 264 ; lustres, 275 ; bone in earthenware, 278
Wood and Caldwell, Staffordshire figures, 256
Woolfe, Thomas, of Stoke, silver lustre, partnership with John Davenport, 289
Wright, John, 123–5
Wright, William, 125
Wrotham, comparison of wares of, with those of Staffordshire, 109 ; two-handled flask, 136
Wulstan, St., Priory, 40 ; connection with the Pottery district, 41

Yale, landscape painter, Copeland's, 307

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